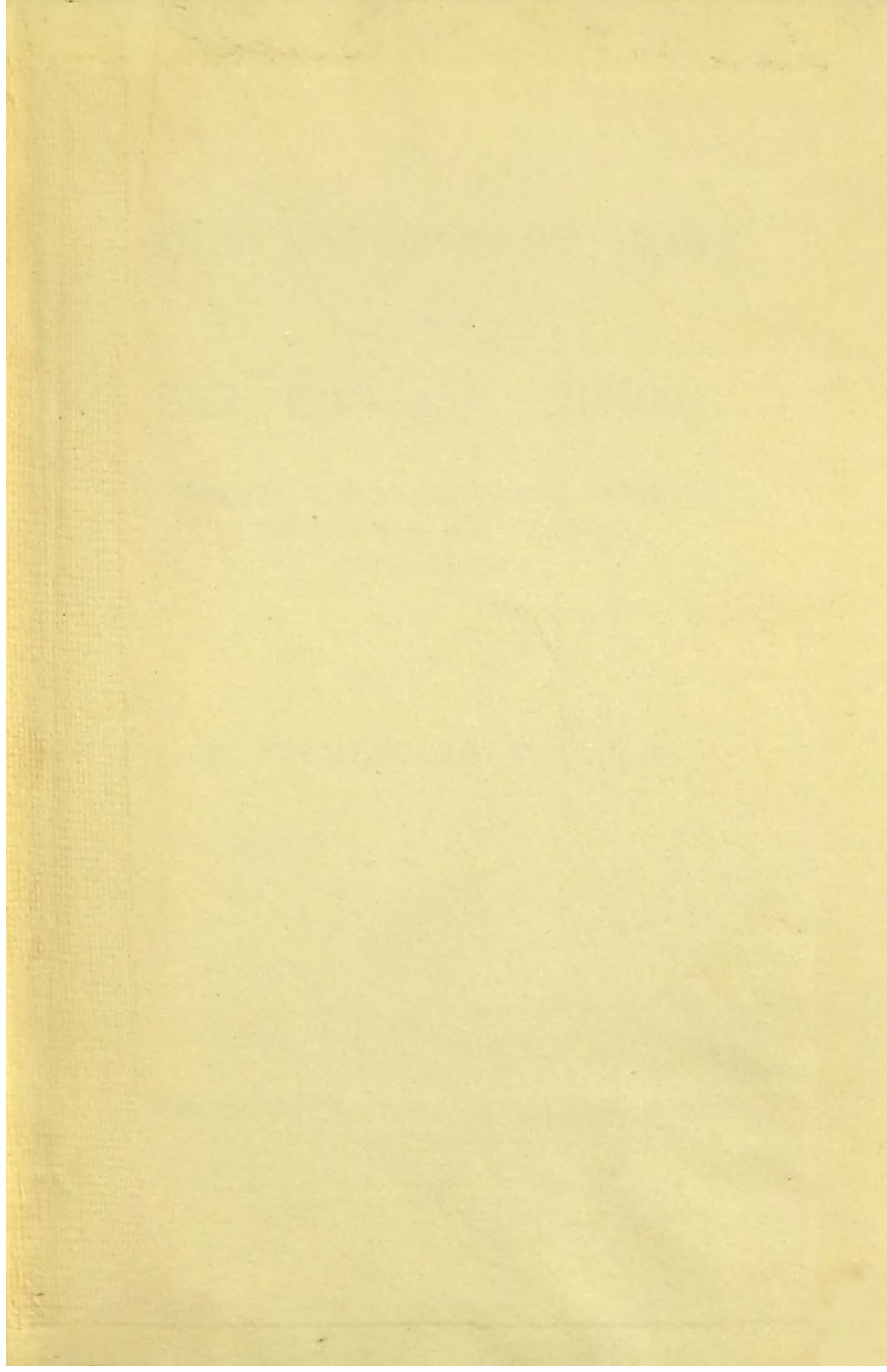




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THE RUSSIANS AT HOME

AND

THE RUSSIANS ABROAD:

*SKETCHES, UNPOLITICAL AND POLITICAL,
OF RUSSIAN LIFE UNDER
ALEXANDER II.*

BY

H. SUTHERLAND EDWARDS.

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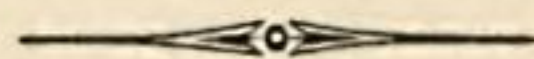
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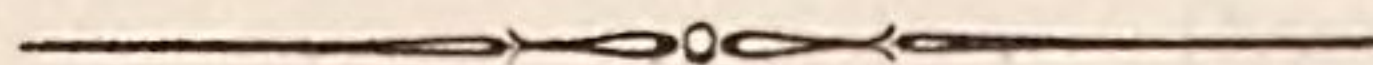
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THE RUSSIANS AT HOME

AND

THE RUSSIANS ABROAD.

CHAPTER I.

THE REFORM PERIOD IN RUSSIA.

OUR system of party government, whatever advantages it may possess, has the bad effect of making a great number of persons adopt cut and dried political views in regard to subjects which need not and ought not to be looked at exclusively in a political light. If an Englishman tells you what political party he belongs to, you may at once know almost certainly what he thinks of Russia at the present moment, and also what he thought of Russia sixteen years ago. If he has a bad opinion of her now, when she is demanding autonomy for Bulgaria, he had a good opinion of her sixteen years since when she was refusing self-government to Poland. If he applauded her action in 1877, when she was playing the part of a liberator in a foreign country where the work of liberation could not but increase her own power, he condemned her conduct in

1863, when she was exercising the indisputable right of suppressing an insurrection within her own dominions. Each of these two sets of seemingly contradictory views is marked, nevertheless, by a certain consistency. To defend the Russian position in Poland, as fourteen years later to defend the Turkish position in Bulgaria, was in each case to show faith in the general utility of maintaining the *status quo*. To take, on the other hand, the part of the Poles in their contest with the Russian Government, to take the part of the Bulgarians against the Turks, was in each case to espouse the cause of an oppressed nationality. We are too active-minded a people, however, to lose much time in accounting for our opinions or in analysing our motives; and the great majority of those who were really interested in the late war took a keen sporting view of it, and in the character of Russophil supported the Russians, or in that of Turcophil backed the Turks.

The Russophil, who is sure to be a Liberal, finds it convenient to forget the past history of his newly-adopted country, and will not allow even her recent misdeeds (as in the matter of the Greek Uniates) to be spoken of. The love of Russia, however, with which he is reproached by his enemies is chiefly shown in the detestation he expresses of everything Turkish. Similarly, Turcophilism consists less in affection for the Turks than in hatred of the Russians. No Turcophil

would wish Turkish marriage customs, or Turkish slave-dealing, or the Turkish method of administering justice to be introduced into Western Europe. But, putting all question of laws and customs aside, the Turcophils declare the Turks to be better men than the Russians, and ask ingeniously enough, "Whether a good Mahometan is not preferable to a bad Christian?" A bad Christian, as an individual, would certainly be a less desirable man to have dealings with than a good Mahometan. But, as a general proposition, it cannot be said by any one who believes in the Christian civilization of Europe, that "a good Mahometan is preferable to a bad Christian"; since the latter will be in contact with European influences to which the former must, except in the rarest instances, remain a stranger.

The Russians may be, and in many respects, no doubt, are, bad Christians. They are Christians all the same; and although that constitutes no reason for supporting them in an unjust or unnecessary war against Mahometans, it explains why, as soon as they had freed themselves from the Tartar domination, they entered into relations with various European nations, adopted useful European inventions, and encouraged foreigners from various parts of Europe to visit and settle in their country. The movement of foreigners towards Russia became more marked with each succeeding reign. But it began with the accession of the first Tzar of Muscovy; an event which

coincided nearly enough with the taking of Constantinople by Mahomet II. Peter the Great is usually spoken of as the first Roman sovereign who endeavoured to Europeanize Russia; and his efforts in this direction were so much greater than those of his predecessors that the latter, by comparison, would seem to have been almost inclined to oppose European influences. But the Tzar Ivan married the near relative of a dispossessed Christian European sovereign; and Sophia, niece of the last Palæologus, may well have attracted the Byzantine architects, artists, and artificers who were among the first foreigners to visit Russia. Later, under Ivan the Terrible, Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Germans were welcomed at Moscow. This monarch was so favourably inclined towards England, that he made a proposal of marriage to Queen Elizabeth, who declined the compliment through a special embassy, and at the same time offered—but in vain—the hand of one of her ladies of honour instead of her own. Alexis Michailwitch, father of Peter the Great, not only encouraged foreigners—like all his predecessors, except those who were too much occupied with domestic affairs to be able to look abroad—but considered himself so fully a member of the European family of kings, that he kept up a sympathetic correspondence with Charles I. during that monarch's troubles, and, after his execution, offered money and men to his son in view of a restoration.

Peter the Great was a strange sort of Christian, and

he had, in some respects, Mahometan tastes. But he considered himself a Christian; he had a Christian-European ideal in the matter of government; and precisely because he was a Christian he brought himself into contact with the Christian civilization of the west. This, to the misfortune of his subjects, he obviously would not have done had he been a Mahometan Tartar or Turk. Since Peter's time Russia has gradually been getting more and more European, and the Europeanized class has gradually been getting larger and larger. Not only has there been a constant current of educated immigrants (as of teachers and skilled artizans) from the west towards Russia; but the educated class in Russia has increased by its own natural force of expansion. The influence of the German nobility in the Baltic provinces conquered by Peter must not be forgotten. These descendants of the sword-bearing knights ("gladiferi") cannot well be dismissed as barbarians. Nearly all the great military, governmental, and foreign diplomatic posts fell into their hands; and though not generally liked in Russia, the German nobility of the Baltic provinces must have exercised a good effect on high Russian society. They in any case swelled in a remarkable manner the numbers of the Russian educated class, which some years later was further increased by a good many Poles, from Lithuania and Ruthenia, who after the successive partitions of the Polish State, took service in Russia.

Since Peter's time, and especially during the reigns of Catherine II., and of Alexander I., Russia received a number of eminent men from Europe without, until quite lately, giving one in return. A Turcophil, however, would show himself a very ignorant Turcophil if, in the present day, he declared himself unable to name any Russian poets, prose writers, painters, composers, or executive musicians who had achieved a European reputation. The Germans, who translate everything, translated long ago the poems of Poushkin, and Lermontoff, and the fables of Kriloff. The tales of Gogol have been translated into French by M. Louis Viardot, and his principal comedy by the late Prosper Mérimée. Mr. Tourguénieff seems himself to translate his own admirable novels into French. The music of Glinka, Tchaikoffsky, and other Russian composers has found its way to our concert-rooms, and this master's best known opera has been performed in several German cities. All this is no doubt as tinkling brass compared to the sounder and more solid civilization of England, France, and Germany. But only such names have been cited as are already familiar to large numbers of Englishmen; and these are cited simply as indications. Pianoforte-playing is not civilization; yet anyone hearing Rubinstein play would rightly infer that he must have been educated in a civilized land.

Because Tourguénieff writes admirable novels, because Verestchagin's drawings are full of character, because

one of Glinka's operas has been performed in Germany, and because Rubinstein is a magnificent pianist, it does not at all follow that the Russians ought to be allowed to advance their frontier, for strategic purposes, up to and beyond the Balkans. But it does follow that they are to be regarded as having given some proofs, accepted throughout Europe, of European culture. They have not, perhaps, made very important contributions to the literature and art of the civilized world, but they have contributed something. They have not been borrowers alone. Nevertheless the most important literary function of Russian writers has hitherto been to spread throughout Russia a knowledge of the literature of England, France, and Germany. This they have done chiefly through the medium of magazines and reviews, of which a greater number are published in Russia than in any other country except England.

The first time I visited Russia immediately, after the accession of the Emperor Alexander, I was much struck by the great development of its periodical press, and still more by the fact that in none of the numerous books on Russia which I had read was its existence so much as mentioned. Under the iron despotism of Nicholas no such thing as political journalism could exist. The *Moscow Gazette*, belonging to the University of Moscow, and the *St. Petersburg Gazette*, the property of the University of St. Petersburg—now

journals of real importance—were at that time petty sheets, containing little beyond official announcements, government advertisements, and scraps translated from foreign newspapers. Mr. Katkoff, who seven years afterwards was to become more popular and more powerful than any journalist has ever been in a free country, was still a professor at the Moscow University. The journals whose names our editors have at last learned to print in Russian—the *Golos*, the *Novoe Vremia*, and a dozen others—had not yet come into being. The monthly and half-monthly reviews, however, were in a flourishing condition, and Mr. Katkoff, aided by his eminent friend and fellow-professor the late Mr. Leonteff,* had just started a new one, the *Russian Messenger*, which shared with the long-established *Contemporary* the honour of introducing into Russian periodical literature independent—if at first somewhat indirect—criticism of Russian internal affairs.

It was felt by all intelligent persons that serfdom must be abolished, and that the administration of justice must be reformed. The editor of the *Russian Messenger* wished, moreover, to see some measure of self-government introduced; of which desire signs might be seen in constant references to proceedings in the English Parliament, articles on the English Constitu-

* An interesting memoir of this gentleman appeared in one of the first numbers of the *Deutsche Rundschau*.

tion, and so on. There could be no question of meddling, for a long time to come, with Eastern affairs; and it was thought that Poland had lost all aspiration, or at least all positive hope, for a separate political existence. Thus the Russians could give themselves up to a consideration of their own necessities and wants; and the relaxed condition of the censorship allowed it to be seen that writers might now approach with comparative freedom subjects off which they would quickly have been warned in the Emperor Nicholas's time.

Side by side with translations from Grote's *History of Greece* and Motley's *Rise of the Netherlands* were appearing at that time in the half-dozen large reviews, published for the most part once a fortnight, numerous translations from contemporary English novelists, such as Dickens, Thackeray, and Mrs Gaskell. This was surprising to a stranger as proving the existence of a very much larger reading public than was generally supposed to exist in Russia, and of a reading public possessing good taste and capable of interesting itself in serious studies.

The contents, however, of these reviews possessed significance of another kind. Tourguénieff, Gregorovitch, and other native writers, were contributing tales, nearly all of which turned on the miseries of faithful, all-suffering serfs cursed—like the *Anton Goremyka* of Gregorovitch and the *Moumounia* of Tourguénieff—with cruel masters. Mr. Aksakoff, a member of the well-

known Slavophil family, one of whom is now president of the notorious Moscow "Slavonic Committee," was publishing in *National Annals* sketches of country life, and of the relations between proprietors and peasants, under the title of *Family Chronicles*.

At least as remarkable as the studies in narrative form of the condition of the peasantry were some satirical pictures of provincial society by a writer calling himself Schtchedrin, in which the corruption of the various classes of officials was unsparingly and most amusingly exposed. Law at that time in Russia, instead of being a protection, was at once a terror and a trap. Persons who had been robbed preferred in many cases to keep the matter a secret. For if they took proceedings the police made them pay heavily, even though they proved their case ; while if they failed to prove it, the thief also made them pay. When a servant robbed his master, the best thing to do with him was to get him quietly out of the house, without making any charge against him ; for to call a thief a thief was a very serious affair, of which the police, instructed by the robber, would assuredly take notice. Whether as accuser or as accused, it was better to have nothing to do with the police ; for under one pretext or another they could compel the attendance time after time of those who had once had the misfortune to come into relations with them, until it at last became neces-

sary, at all cost, to terminate the connection. Schtchedrin to make his readers laugh, showed how an ingenious police-officer might make money by carrying the body of a dead man first to one village, then to another, and letting the inhabitants understand at each place that unless they came to terms they might be held answerable for the death. This story might have been borrowed from the *Arabian Nights*. Another, by the same author, of which some of the details are modern enough, though the whole in spirit is essentially Asiatic, had its origin in the law of compulsory vaccination. The functionaries entrusted with the duty of seeing that the peasants were vaccinated, summoned them to a room in which stood the surgeon, armed with an enormous sabre, ready to perform the sanguinary and possibly fatal operation on all who would not pay to be let off.

Satire of a slightly farcical kind was still the only weapon with which official abuses could be attacked. The utter inadequacy of this Harlequin's lath, this Punch's *bâton*, had been proved in the case of Gogol's admirable comedy of *Revizor*, at which the Emperor Nicholas had shown himself so unreservedly amused that the author felt called upon to explain in a preface that "behind this laughter there were bitter tears." Schtchedrin's *Provincial Sketches*, then, were remarkable as containing an exposure, at once more direct and more complete than any that had previously appeared,

of the monstrous and grotesque malpractices of the judicial and administrative authorities. So great were these that it seemed scarcely possible they could be put an end to by reforms in institutions alone. Reforms, however, of the most sweeping character, after being carefully prepared, were seven years afterwards introduced; and the publication of Schtchedrin's *Provincial Sketches* may be said to have marked the date at which the impossibility of maintaining the old system of law and police had come to be so fully recognized that writers enjoyed full liberty to expose its iniquity. Even then it had been decided in principle that the courts should be open to the public, that oral instead of documentary evidence should be taken, that cases should be tried by jury, that barristers should be admitted to plead, and that newspapers should be allowed to publish reports of proceedings.

The reform, or rather the reconstitution, of the judicial system and the emancipation of the serfs are the two great peaceful measures by which the reign of Alexander II. will be remembered; to which may be added the introduction of local self-government in village communes, districts, and provinces, and in a few of the largest cities. It was thought at the time these assemblies were formed that as communal assemblies sent members to district assemblies, and as from district assemblies were elected the members of provincial assemblies, so from the provincial assemblies

deputies might some day be called to sit in a central assembly for the whole empire. But the local assemblies seem to have been devised simply to meet an evident want, and to enable people in the country and in country towns to get streets paved and lighted, bridges built, granaries formed, schools established, and so on, without its being necessary at every step to make application to the officials of a highly centralised administration, which had its head-quarters at St. Petersburg and possessed no available funds. A blow was struck at Schtchedrin's corrupt and cruel functionaries as well through the local assemblies as through the new judicial institutions.

The Russians for a half-dozen years, from 1857 to 1863, worked at their reforms almost without a check; indeed the judicial reforms were introduced after the check had been already received. From the Emperor's accession until the actual outbreak of the long-threatened Polish insurrection the zeal for improvement went on constantly increasing; and now, looking back twenty years, one may see that the three important reforms most urgently needed were all indicated in the periodical publications that were appearing at the end of 1856 and the beginning of 1857.

England during this period was popular enough in Russia. Mr. Katkoff, who possesses a remarkable knowledge of English affairs and of the nature and

operation of English institutions, wrote so much about England and the English constitution, and of the part played in politics by the English aristocracy, that the satirical journal of St. Petersburg represented him habitually as an Anglo-maniac.

It is to be regretted that no one who now writes about Russia knew that country in the time of Nicholas. The Russians are a changeable people, and pass quickly from one mood to another. But at the very beginning of the reign of Alexander II. the condition of Russia and of things Russian can scarcely have been so very different from what it was at the very end of the reign of Nicholas. It was felt, however, when Nicholas died, that a heavy weight had been removed, and it may be that the reaction by which the withdrawal of such an oppressive force would naturally be followed showed itself at once in people's conversation. The tyranny of the Emperor Nicholas was such that it would be difficult to exaggerate it; but it seemed to me on first arriving in Russia that it could not have had such a deadening effect on Russian society as was generally attributed to it; and the travellers who visited Russia in the days of the Emperor Nicholas must certainly have been wrong in declaring, as most of them did, that there was an entire absence of intellectual life in the country. The mass of the reading public must have been the same at the end of the last as at the beginning of the present reign; and in 1855, as in

1856, Russian readers, though they heard not a word about home politics, had all the chief productions of European literature brought within their reach through the large monthly and fortnightly literary miscellanies already spoken of.

“Our reviews,” wrote Alexander Herzen, upwards of thirty years ago, “penetrate to the borders of China, and enable the inhabitants of Simbirsk and Tobolsk to read the novels of Dickens and George Sand a few weeks after their publication in London and Paris.”

There was a relaxation in the exercise of the censorship immediately after the accession of the present Emperor; and it has been shown that already at the beginning of 1857 Russian writers were allowed to approach such subjects as the condition of the peasantry, the effect in practice of the existing judicial and administrative systems, and so on. Some minor but far from unimportant reforms were at once introduced by a stroke of the pen. The price of foreign passports was lowered from something like forty pounds a year to about thirty shillings, paid once for all; and the restriction which limited the number of students at each university to three hundred was unconditionally removed.

Soon afterwards steps were taken for establishing railway connection between Russia and Western Europe. This last measure does not at first sight seem to be one of those which can be classed under the head of “re-

forms." The Emperor Nicholas, however, wished to have as little as possible to do with the West; and not to construct railways to the Western frontiers was as much part of his system as was the imposition of a fine of three hundred roubles annually on Russians travelling abroad. It was evident that if railways were made through Russia towards Prussia and Austria, Russians must travel by them or the lines would never pay their expenses. Accordingly the excessive tax on foreign passports could not but be abolished when it was decided to build railways.

The Emperor Nicholas's truly despotic regulation in regard to the number of students to be admitted to each university, besides being hateful in itself, could not be maintained in presence of any serious determination to reform the judicial and administrative systems. Four universities, with three hundred students at each university, would, according to Nicholas, supply Russia with a sufficient number of highly educated men to keep the machine of State going in its old grooves, and that was all he cared for.

The Emperor Nicholas, too, from his own point of view, was perfectly right. He wished things to remain quiet in Russia; and though opportunities for travelling abroad and for obtaining superior instruction at home must have benefited the country, they have indeed proved causes of disturbance. If there had been no railways to Russia, Mr. Herzen's revolutionary journal, the *Bell*,

would not have been introduced so largely as it in fact was between the years 1860 and 1863. Nor would so many Russians and Russian Poles have visited Mr. Herzen in London, where on certain days his rooms used to be crowded with visitors of all kinds from his native land.

Finally, if the number of students at the universities had been kept limited, the annual crop of possibly not dangerous, but certainly troublesome revolutionists turned out by these seminaries would have been considerably smaller than it now seems to be. The opinion of students may not be very important. Still less to be feared is their action. They have no hold on the peasantry. They cannot possibly move the army; and if the peasantry and the army are sound, what force is there in Russia to bring against the government? Still disaffection is a thing to be guarded against in a State; and the Emperor Nicholas was determined to have as little of it as possible. It was not only or chiefly by his ideas that the university student was thought likely to prove dangerous. The fact had also to be considered that if the universities turned out a very large number of students, many of them would experience great difficulty in finding a suitable career, and would become malcontents.

The earliest reforms, then, of the present reign were a written and an unwritten reform:—1. Permission to

go abroad for every one who chose to pay ten roubles ;
2. Relaxation of the censorship.

New journals were rapidly started when it was perceived that affairs of the day, including home affairs, might be discussed with comparative freedom ; and numbers of books on subjects previously forbidden were introduced and translated, when it was found that such translations could be offered for sale. Mill's *On Liberty* would have been a popular book at this period, if only on account of its title. The word "liberty" was fascinating in itself. The thing also was prized ; and the first Russian translation of Mr. Mill's book was followed by a second, with notes, which occupied more space than the text, and were intended to show that the author's ideas in reference to liberty were narrow. Several works on representative government were translated, and a Russian author produced an account of the constitutions and charters of the various countries in Europe which possessed free institutions.

One of the door-keepers of the House of Commons told me a few years afterwards that it was astonishing how many Russians had of late looked in at the debates, and asked if I could explain this to him unaccountable phenomenon. The explanation was simple enough. The number of Russians visiting foreign countries had greatly increased ; and of these a certain proportion had learned to take interest in our parliamentary proceedings.

Since Russia has been engaged in a war with Turkey, it is often said—what was never said before—that the important reforms introduced in Russia during the present reign have been ineffective. They have not given such beneficial results as were expected from them. What reforms ever did? But they have done good. Even if they had proved failures, they would have been honourable failures; for it was most desirable that the peasants should be emancipated, that the judicial system should be reconstituted after the model of West-European systems, and that, throughout the country, the inhabitants of districts and towns should be enabled to attend to local affairs and levy taxes for local improvements without being obliged on every occasion to address requests through various channels to a central administration. Russians are still liable to be arrested and exiled in virtue of an administrative order alone; and in an important political case tried a year or two ago at St. Petersburg, though the principle of publicity was admitted in connection with it, the law on the subject was none the less evaded by so filling the court with prisoners, to the number of nearly two hundred, and their counsel, that there was no room for reporters nor for outsiders of any kind. To reform institutions is not to transform men, and the Russians of to-day are doubtless in many respects very like the Russians of twelve or twenty years since.

It was considered the proper thing from about 1860

to 1863 for Russians of advanced liberal tendencies, who visited the West of Europe, to continue their journey as far as London, if only for the purpose of calling on Mr. Herzen. Those Russians who thought it more prudent not to show themselves at the house of this declared enemy of Russian autocracy—where spies easily penetrated—made a point all the same of bringing home copies of his journal. It was the fashion in Russia among people of a certain position to see the *Bell* (*Kolokol*) apart from all question of sharing its views. Those who suffered from its attacks, equally with those who approved them, wished to see what revelations, what sarcasms, and what diatribes each next weekly number would contain; and stories, more or less fantastic, were told of the ingenious devices by which it was introduced. Some said it was passed through the custom-house in sardine boxes, others in bales of cotton. The entry into Russia must certainly have been facilitated by custom-house officers, who perhaps were bribed, perhaps shared Mr. Herzen's political opinions. The *Kolokol* often received contributions from government officials, and possibly, therefore, its circulation may have been helped by members of the administration, who either were anxious to see certain official abuses corrected, or who merely took pleasure in seeing their superiors ridiculed and blamed.

Mr. Herzen's patriotic tone prevented his journal from being classed with works directed not only against the

evils of the Russian political system and the corruption of Russian functionaries, but against Russia generally. It was said that the Emperor Alexander read the *Kolokol* regularly ; and a tale, highly characteristic of the period, was told of a special *Kolokol* printed, through the aid of interested persons at St. Petersburg, for his Majesty's own particular reading, from which an article exposing these persons' misconduct had been omitted. But, as the story continues, the attack on the dishonest officials, cut from a genuine number of the *Kolokol*, was forwarded to the Emperor in an envelope ; so that he learned at the same time not only that certain misdeeds had been committed, but also that the authors of these misdeeds had thought it necessary to practice upon him a gross deception, in order to keep from his knowledge the accusation made against them.

On one occasion, in 1862, a list of Russians who had called on Mr. Herzen in London, and who were to be arrested on their return to Russia, was sent to the *Kolokol* office, and duly published in the journal ; not, however, before some few of the visitors had been already seized.

In the year 1859 Mr. Herzen was calling out in every number of his journal both for reforms which even now have not been introduced, and for others which a few years afterwards were actually adopted. Emancipation of the peasantry, abolition of corporal punishment,

trial by jury, were three of the points contained in Mr. Herzen's charter; which also contained liberty of the press, guarantees against arbitrary arrest, and the formation of a representative assembly. It would be a mistake to suppose that the *Kolokol* did much towards bringing about or even hastening serf emancipation, of which the reform of the judicial system was the natural accompaniment; and it might be difficult to say what the positive result of its influence really was. "*Vivos voco*" was its motto, and it certainly had an awakening effect. It showed itself a lively censor of the administration, and must have weakened in many minds the respect for State authorities. It encouraged the Poles to rise, under the delusion that Poles fighting for national liberty would be assisted by Russians aspiring to political liberty; and it may fairly be regarded as the natural progenitor of a number of revolutionary papers and broadsides which were circulated and stuck on the St. Petersburg walls in 1861 and in 1862, and which seemed to be connected with the St. Petersburg press of that period. Mr. Herzen was an admirable polemical writer, and his command of language, no less than the character of his fine sonorous voice, showed that under favourable circumstances he might have been a great orator. But, an exile in England, he could naturally take no part in elaborating the important reforms that were being prepared in Russia; and the part he played in connection with his native

land was—for evil and for good—that of an awakener and a disturber.

Mr. Herzen, though by far the most powerful of the various writers who contributed to the *Kolokol*, had assistants in Ogareff the poet, his coadjutor from the beginning, and Bakounin the revolutionist, who worked for the *Kolokol* from his arrival in London after his escape from Siberia, early in 1862, until the outbreak of the Polish insurrection and the formation of the western diplomatic league against Russia, when the *Kolokol* found itself all at once deserted by its readers.

From the accession of Alexander II. until the Polish insurrection of 1863 a considerable number of Russian writers published abroad works more or less revolutionary on the subject of Russia. The most harmless of them, and, as many Englishmen would think, the most rational, was the late Baron Fircks, better known by his *nom de plume* of Schedo-Ferrotti. He was not an exile, and, perhaps for that reason, was regarded by the exiles with a certain suspicion. Moreover, he was the “financial secretary” of the Russian Legation at Brussels; which enabled those who thought his views too modest to say that he was “in the pay” of the government. He proposed to pacify Poland, or at least to render it what he considered justice, by giving a constitution to the kingdom of Poland—Lithuania being regarded as part of Russia, which, also, was to have its constitution.

The late Prince Dolgoroukoff, author of a multitude of books on Russian affairs, desired nothing more for Russia than constitutional government of an aristocratic pattern. During the reign of Nicholas, being at the time a member of the Russian Embassy at Paris, he had offended his sovereign by some publication and had therefore been ordered to return. With a gaiety which seldom deserted him he offered to send his photograph, but declined to go back himself; and at the same time begged the Emperor to remember that the ancestors of the Dolgoroukoffs were Tzars of Moscow when the forefathers of the reigning house were not even dukes of Holstein-Gottorp. It was a sort of tradition in the Dolgoroukoff family to demand constitutions; and partly perhaps for that reason, but also for more valid ones, which are to be found in his numerous and often very interesting works, the prince in question called upon Alexander II. to form a parliament. Prince Dolgoroukoff read Herzen's books, admired his talent, and was on good terms with him, but without sharing his views. Herzen, however, had followers who went far beyond their leader; and these advanced members of an extreme party had but a poor opinion of Prince Dolgoroukoff, who, on his side, had no opinion at all of them.

Herzen, though he could not well have gone back to Russia, had not been forced to leave the country, but had quitted it, towards the end of the Emperor Nicholas's

reign, because he found it impossible to pursue there his vocation as a writer. He was a man of considerable property, which, by an ingenious device, and through the agency of Rothschild, he contrived to save from confiscation ;* and his associate in the direction of the *Kolokol*, the poet Ogareff, had possessed considerable property in land, which he voluntarily abandoned to his peasants—not, as I was assured by one of his neighbours, to the peasants' advantage. However that may have been, Ogareff, like Herzen, was a thorough enthusiast. It might, indeed, be said that while Herzen was an enthusiast, Ogareff was a fanatic.

Bakounin went further even than Ogareff. Ogareff, for instance, held that land belonged by right to those who cultivated it, but was willing, in view of serious difficulties, to see a compromise effected by which a portion of every estate should belong to the so-called proprietor. So, at least, Ogareff set forth in a little book on Russia, dedicated to an English friend. Bakounin, however, was not a man of compromises. He belonged by his family to the class of landed proprietors. But he had appeared as a revolutionary leader in 1848 ; and in 1849, after the suppression of the various revolutionary movements in Germany, he was made prisoner and delivered over to the Russian Government, which sent him to Siberia. After remaining eleven years in

* See *L'Empereur Rothschild et le Banquier Nicholas* ; par A. Herzen.

Siberia, where one of his cousins was governor-general, he profited by the liberty of locomotion which his good conduct and his apparent resignation had gained for him, to reach the coast and get on board an American vessel, which took him to Japan, where he was enabled by the French embassy in Japan to continue his voyage to New York, and ultimately to London.

Bakounin had a strong objection to everything. England, as an aristocratic country, displeased him almost as much as Russia, the country of autocracy. In England, moreover, the peasants, being without land, seemed to him worse off even than the still unemancipated Russian serfs. He aimed not merely at destruction, but at general disintegration. Countries were to be broken up into provinces, provinces into districts, districts into communes, while every commune was to be self-governing. Among other advantages, this system, as he once explained to me, would do away with patriotism, and with wars for national aggrandisement and the gratification of national vanity. A critic of Mr. Bakounin's scheme once pointed out that there could be no reason why the process of disintegration should cease at the commune. The self-governing commune, he suggested, might be divided into self-governing groups, and the self-governing groups into self-governing individuals. Of course every one, according to Bakounin's system, was to have land; and all dignities, all offices, were to be abolished.

A German reformer, to whom it was objected that the reforms he was advocating could lead to nothing but anarchy, replied that "a genial anarchy"—*eine gemüthliche anarchie*—was not a thing to be despised. The anarchy, however, which Bakounin wished to bring about would have had nothing genial in it. The political sect of which he was a leading member believed neither in God nor in heaven, but only in the earth—of which every individual was to have his own little piece.

CHAPTER II.

THE REFORM PERIOD IN RUSSIA (*continued*).

A VERY interesting account might be written of the various bodies of emigrants who for political reasons have left their native land, sometimes to have nothing more to do with it, like the settlers in Virginia and the Scotchmen who, after 1715 and 1745, took service in Russia, Prussia, and Poland; sometimes to conspire against it, like the followers of Prince Charles and the *émigrés* of the French revolutionary period; sometimes to conspire in its favour, like the Irish of the Irish Legions in France and the Poles who came to London and to Paris in such numbers after the insurrection of 1830, and again after the lesser rising of 1863. Then there is the Russian emigration, the latest, by far the least numerous, but not the least powerful of them all. No other emigrant ever exercised so much influence in

the country he had quitted as Mr. Herzen exercised in Russia from the beginning of the reform agitation by which the first announcements on the subject of serf-emancipation were speedily followed, to the collapse produced by the Polish insurrection of 1863; which, enjoying as it did the worse than useless favour of European diplomacy, drove Russians of all classes and creeds to give unconditional support to their own government.

Since Herzen's death, Bakounin, a far less powerful writer, but a more determined conspirator, has, living in Switzerland, been the moving spirit of the revolutionary organizations with which, of late years, the surface of all Russia seems to have been covered. There were emigrants and literary emigrants from Russia before Herzen's time. But the books they published on Russia and Russian affairs were written chiefly for foreigners; and in Nicholas's time it would have been both difficult and useless to introduce into Russia works aiming at the subversion of the existing state of things. Owing to the enormous cost of foreign passports, and the rarity with which they were granted, the number of Russians visiting foreign parts was very small. Nor were foreigners encouraged to visit Russia. Nor were the communications between Russia and Western Europe by any means so easy, in a material sense, as they have since become. Nor, above all,

was Russian soil ready to receive such seed as Mr. Herzen was prepared to sow, and which he sowed with effect when the rigidity of the Nicholas system had at last come to an end.

Before any change had been effected in the written laws of the Empire, when the peasants were still in a condition of serfdom, when the old judicial system was still in force, and when no announcement had, as yet, been made on the subject of the local assemblies afterwards to be formed, it could already be seen, from various external signs, that affairs in Russia were no longer the same as in Nicholas's time, or in the period immediately following the accession of Alexander II. More newspapers were about, and in 1861 journals of all kinds were on sale at the railway stations, which had not been the case in 1857. In 1856 and 1857 a soldier, meeting an officer in the street, halted, took off his cap, and remained uncovered (sometimes, it would seem, at the risk of catching a violent cold) until the officer had passed. In 1861 soldiers saluted officers as in other countries, without halting and without uncovering. In 1857 a gentleman paying a morning or afternoon visit to a lady, was expected, under pain of passing for an ill-bred and grossly familiar person, to appear in evening clothes. In 1861 he could dress on such occasions as in other countries. In 1857 it was absolutely necessary to put on evening clothes in order to be admitted into the picture-gallery of the Her-

mitage, for was not the Hermitage a palace? In 1861 this rule was no longer in force. In 1857 smoking in the streets of St. Petersburg was forbidden. In 1861 it was permitted, or at least tolerated. In 1857, at Moscow, if not at the more cosmopolitan St. Petersburg, only the lowest of the low would ride in an omnibus—Russian omnibuses at that period were indeed of primitive and slightly facetious construction. In 1861 Russian omnibuses were no longer open vehicles, consisting of two long benches placed back to back, and separated by a high partition: they were of ordinary make, and it was no longer a disgrace (at least not at St. Petersburg) to be seen in one. In the passport offices the clerks of the year 1857 used to take bribes freely, in the form of paper-money, conveniently folded in the document to which their signature was required. In 1861 I learned that it was neither considered necessary nor desirable, nor even, in some cases, polite to offer bribes at random. In 1857 the post-office clerks at Moscow used to lend their friends the English illustrated papers before sending them out to be delivered to the persons who had subscribed for them. In 1861 this curious but not unamiable practice had been abandoned. In 1857 officers travelling by the St. Petersburg-Moscow railway did not pay for their tickets, or rather dispensed altogether with them; and many civilians, after travelling the whole distance, bought tickets only at the last station for presentation

at the terminus. Others with a third-class ticket travelled first-class. Every one cheated the railway, which belonged at that time to the government; and every one gave the guard a rouble or so, according to the extent of the fraud connived at. The guards were honest men in the style of those moderately severe Russian officials who, in the words of Gogol, do not "steal too much for their place." Thus a guard who had been properly bribed, always mentioned the fact to the guard who replaced him at a certain point in the journey; upon which this other guard, in the fairest manner, did not expect to be bribed again. In 1861 the St. Petersburg-Moscow railway having now passed into the hands of a company, every traveller paid the appointed price for his place, according to the class in which he proposed to travel. The guards apparently received a salary, but they could no longer make their fortune as their predecessors were reported to have done.

There was less rigidity then in some things, and there was less laxity in others. Visiting Russia a third time in 1864, I found matters the same externally in that year as in 1861 and 1862. But the change even in the outward aspect of things between the years 1857 and 1861 was very remarkable and very significant. The insurrectionary movement in Poland, which, eighteen months later, was to put an end to the reform movement in Russia, had not as yet caused the

Russians any anxiety. The Russians, indeed, hoped to profit by it; for, with a view of allaying the agitation, concessions were being made to Poland, which, it was felt, must sooner or later be extended to Russia. For this reason the Russian Liberals would have been glad to see the constitution of 1815 restored to Poland. No one in Russia thought at that time that the Poles would actually rise; and many, finding that Poland was to have a separate Council of State, and that the University of Warsaw was to be restored, and that certain elective assemblies were to be formed, flattered themselves that the end of it would be the introduction of a constitutional system first into Poland, and afterwards into Russia generally.

Thus, after passing several months in various parts of Poland, I found, on arriving at St. Petersburg, no trace of bitterness against the Poles, except, indeed, among a few of the severer kind of officers, who objected to anarchy in all forms and under all conditions. Mr. Katkoff, editor of the *Russian Messenger* and of the *Moscow Gazette*, who attacked the Poles so bitterly when the insurrection had broken out and was being supported by Western diplomacy, wrote nothing against them as long as they only asked for concessions of which the last word was known to be the constitution of 1815. Mr. Aksakoff, whose name has since become so well known in connection with the Slavonic Committee of Moscow, denied, like all Russians, the right

of the Poles to Lithuania and the other provinces of ancient Poland annexed by Russia, in which the majority of the inhabitants are not of Polish descent; but, like the moderate-liberal *Russian Messenger* and the extreme-liberal *Contemporary*, he was in favour of granting the fullest liberty to the Poles of the kingdom of Poland, even to the extent of abandoning the country to them altogether. Then, as now, the Aksakoffs attached great importance to the principle of nationality and supreme importance to the principle of Slavonian unity. They also, in their Slavonian organ, the *Day*, regarded all questions from what they considered a high moral point of view. The Polish claims to Kieff and Smolensk were described as "mad," and not only "quite mad, but immoral in the highest sense of the word, being based upon possession gained by force, and directed against the freedom of the people." But "judging with all severity the Polish claims to Kieff and Smolensk, we should sin against logical sense were we to deny the legitimacy of their patriotism in regard to Posen, Cracow, and Warsaw. If the Austrians and Prussians have not had conscientiousness vouchsafed to them sufficiently acute to enable them to understand in what relation they stand to the Polish people, we can boast of the special mercy of God in that respect, so that we are made to feel every falling-off from the moral law; to feel every, even the smallest, departure from

rectitude, and, accordingly, that much of it which our historical lot has assigned to us in connection with Poland. . . .

“ As for the annexation of the kingdom of Poland, Russia granted it a constitution ; and Polish nationality, by the way, owes its very existence to that incapacity of ours which, as we have said, forms our *moral merit* in history. If any fault can be charged against us, it is to be found in our having supported the ambitious claims of our neighbours, and having consented to the subjection of a free Slavonian race to foreigners. But, on the whole, Russia was less in fault than either of the other Powers as regards the destruction and partition of Poland, though, as a moral country, she feels more deeply than either of them whatever injustice there was in the affair. From this it is clear, that for the peace of our national conscience it is absolutely necessary to give freedom and power to the moral principle, and to manage to get to the truth as to our relations towards the Poles. . . . We will allow ourselves a supposition. Supposing we were to step out of Poland and take our stand on our own Russian boundaries ? Firmly protecting the latter, we could then be patient and impartial witnesses of the internal struggles and labours of Poland. Undoubtedly that would be not only morally pure, but even generous on our part. Continuing our supposition, let us ask, would the Poles have enough strength to

create anything good and lasting, and would their neighbourhood be injurious to us? . . .

“ If the Poles, carried away by their political ambition, should overstep their boundaries and invade us, they would meet not only unremitting resistance from the people, but would give us a full moral right to punish their unlawfulness and destroy the cause of wrongful bloodshed. But if the Poles are capable of being re-born, of repenting of their historical mistakes, and will take their stand as a peaceful Slavonian people, then, certainly, the Russian people would be glad to see in them kind, friendly neighbours. However, we think that, in any case, Poland, after some years, would try to re-unite herself—this time willingly and sincerely—to Russia. The wound in our body, so long and so painfully sore, would then, at last, be healed. Our social conscience would no longer be troubled by doubt, and the moral principle would fully triumph. Is it possible that this end cannot be attained by a peaceful and reasonable path? Can it be that the Poles, having forgotten the rule—*Respice finem*—is it possible that they can only be brought to reason by *incidents*, and that no other proofs can reach them? We are convinced that, early or late, there will be the closest, fullest, and most sincere union of Slavonian Poland with Slavonian Russia. The course of history leads undeniably thereto. And would it not be better, in the sight of such an unavoidable historical

conclusion, to look forward and remove all causes of animosity and misfortune, and, willingly confessing and repenting mutually of our historical sins, join together in a brotherly and intimate union against our general enemies—ours and of all Slavonians.”

The *Dyen* (*Day*) was ultimately suppressed. Not that the Aksakoffs and their Slavophil followers entertained then, any more than now, direct revolutionary tendencies. But their independent spirit might in itself be regarded as a danger; and the principle of nationality so constantly and so energetically affirmed by them had much affinity with the better understood principle of democracy. The Slavophiles are anti-German, anti-bureaucratic, and, in their thoroughly Slavonian Russia of the future, would found everything on the communal institutions of the peasantry, who alone in Russia are held to have maintained in perfect purity the sacred traditions of Slavonian life. Seeing in Russia the hope of all other Slavonian countries, the Aksakoffs would, for that reason alone, have been opposed to everything that threatened the existence and prosperity of Russia as a State. They could have no sympathy, then, with Mr. Herzen's views. Herzen was delighted, nevertheless, with the *Day*, and saluted its editors as *nos amis les ennemis*.

With all its strength the Russian colossus has many points of weakness: and the Russian emigrants in London, who aimed at nothing less than the complete

destruction of the State, saw allies in the Slavophiles, with their strong feeling of nationality, in the religious dissidents (whose supposed interests were at one time looked after in London by Mr. Kelsieff), in the peasantry who, it was hoped, would show themselves dissatisfied with the results of the Law of Emancipation, and in the Poles. An insurrection of peasants did, in fact, take place in the government of Kazan soon after the publication of the Law of February, 1861, headed by an impostor named Anton Petroff, who called himself the Emperor, and assured the peasants that the land which the Law required them to redeem had been made over to them unconditionally. But Petroff was shot, and the peasants generally showed more intelligence and more moderation than their pretended friends had credited them with.

Towards the end of 1861 the revolutionary party found—or perhaps created—a new support in a sudden passion for establishing popular schools, which seized upon officers, professors, students, and the educated classes generally in St. Petersburg. There was much that was admirable in this movement; and it was not every one who, in undertaking to teach soldiers and workmen to read and write, did so with the sole motive of instructing them in the principles of revolution. In the autumn of 1861 an officer to whom I was speaking of the change which, having just arrived at St. Petersburg, I had noticed in the appearance and

demeanour of the Russian soldier, told me that more important changes were taking place than those which I might have observed in the attitude, no longer slavish, of the soldier in presence of his chiefs. "Come to the Military School," he said, "next Sunday, and you will see something that will perhaps surprise you."

At the Military School, as at the School of Artillery, and several other military establishments and barracks—almost everywhere, in fact, where soldiers were quartered—Sunday classes had been formed. The officers acted as teachers, and the soldiers under their guidance learned reading, writing, arithmetic, and in some cases geometrical drawing. The rooms were hung round with maps and plans; and the soldiers, writing at their desks or grouped round instructors, seemed industrious and attentive. I was told that they had a great desire to learn, and learned very quickly. I visited three of these schools at which officers had transformed themselves into Sunday-school teachers; and I was intimate enough with some of the teachers to be able to ask them the true meaning of this rage on the part of officers for improving the mental and moral condition of their men. After several conversations on the subject, I came to the conclusion that the officers who taught in the Sunday-schools were animated by a sincere desire to benefit the soldiers. They did not forget, however, that the cordial relations they were establish-

ing with them would secure for them an influence of a new kind. The Russian soldier was formerly in mortal terror of his officer. He obeyed him ; but there could be no question of entering into his ideas and sharing his views. The officers who taught in the Sunday-schools wished to gain the intelligent sympathy of their men; not perhaps with a view to the requirements of the service alone. They were all liberals, and often of a very "advanced" type. But who in Russia was not a liberal during the years 1861 and 1862, from the publication, that is to say, of the emancipation edict, with the ideas of social and political regeneration which it called forth (and with the hopes of a general subversion of the political structure which to some minds it also suggested) until the violent reaction suddenly brought about by the Polish insurrection?

The liberalism of the military Sunday-school teachers was thought, in any case, to be of too practical a kind; and the schools, after being for a time looked upon by the superior authorities with a certain favour, were in the end closed. The Governor-General of St. Petersburg and the principal police officials had disapproved of them from the first.

While the military Sunday-schools of St. Petersburg were still in existence, a well-known professor of the Moscow University assured me that they were "hotbeds of revolution." No proofs on the subject were

ever publicly produced; and some said that it was from suspicion of the teachers, others that it was from discoveries made as to the character of the books used that the determination to close the Sunday-schools proceeded.

Censors in despotic States have often been ridiculed for seeking, and even discovering, revolutionary ideas in the most harmless publications. But revolutionary writers have shown equal ingenuity in introducing their ideas into the most unlikely works, such as spelling-books, primers, picture-books, and the like. I was assured in 1861, by a person who ought to have been well informed on such points, that a Russian revolutionary cookery-book had been brought out, in which directions for preparing dishes were varied by reflections on liberty. School-books and manuals on ordinary subjects pass the censorship in ordinary times easily enough; and once marked with the official stamp of approbation, they can be sold without danger, however doubtful their contents. Many of the revolutionary picture-books had not passed the censorship at all. In these cases, the revolutionary matter had been put into an attractive and seemingly innocent form, with the view of getting it swallowed by the peasantry.

In ordinary reading circles, every author seemed at that time to be tested by the degree of "liberalism" contained in his writings. A young Russian officer

who had been reading Kinglake's *History of the Crimean War*, told me that what he chiefly admired in that work (admirable for so many reasons) was the "daring manner in which the author spoke of the Emperor Nicholas." I heard Macaulay praised by Russians on the ground of his eminent merit as a "liberal" writer. A Russian young lady, whom I recommended to read *Christie Johnstone*, wanted to know whether in that charming tale the author expressed "liberal opinions." Liberalism found its way even into the pictures of the period; and in the Exhibition of 1861 the patience of the poor was freely contrasted with the overbearing nature of the rich, while the subject of one painting, which gained for its author a gold medal, was the death of a Polish exile on his way to Siberia.

The public was sometimes more ingenious than the censorship itself in perceiving hidden meanings. The censorship, on the other hand, found, now and then, the most curious mare's-nests; and I was myself deprived in 1862, by the Moscow censorship for books introduced from abroad, of a legendary work on the subject of Twardowski, the Polish Faust, because it pleased the too ingenious censors to believe that Twardowski was an impersonation of Poland, and Mephistopheles an impersonation of Russia.

Just when the passion for teaching at Sunday-schools had reached its height some disturbances of a signifi-

cant kind broke out at the University of St. Petersburg. The effect of lowering the fees and of removing the limitation on the number of students had been to draw hundreds of young men to the universities who were just able, and, in some cases, not quite able to support themselves. Exhibitions were founded in the interest of these latter; and it became the custom to deliver lectures and to get up concerts, at which the principal singers in St Petersburg were expected to give their services gratuitously, for the benefit of poor students. The students maintained a fund among themselves and themselves administered it. Now it had occurred to a newly-appointed Minister of Public Instruction, Count Putiatin, an admiral just arrived from Japan, that the fees at the universities ought to be raised and the fund for the benefit of the poor students suppressed. Count Putiatin was declared by some of his friends to be a great admirer of English institutions, and it had perhaps struck him that Russian universities ought to be in some measure assimilated to English universities. It certainly, however, had appeared to the Government that there was some danger in giving a superior education to a number of young men who had no means of their own and who, if they failed to make a career, would find themselves altogether "unclassed;" too proud to return to their original position, incapable of making a new position for themselves. As a matter of fact, the secret societies of the last few

years have been largely recruited from among university students, especially such as had no particular future before them. It does not thence follow that in Russia, where the educated class is so small compared to the entire population, great facilities for education should not be offered ; and in any case the new regulations introduced by Count Putiatin caused great dissatisfaction on the part of the students as a body, followed by meetings, the sending of deputations, and at last by demonstrations of a public character, with active repression on the part of the troops, numerous arrests, and the closing of the university.

What had happened at the University of St. Petersburg happened soon afterwards at that of Moscow, and indeed at all the universities of the empire. Thus every university in Russia was for a time shut up.

After the closing of the universities, the university professors (at least in St. Petersburg) gave gratuitous lectures at a hall selected for the purpose ; and these were largely attended by students and others, who in every lecture found some pretext for a political demonstration. Several professors, instead of lectures, delivered exciting speeches. But even those who kept strictly to the subject they had engaged to treat found themselves exposed to applause which some of them would gladly have dispensed with. A professor who had been lecturing, not on a political, but on a politico-economical subject, was listened to in silence until,

speaking of State finance, he happened to say that, among the various qualifications for a finance minister, that of honesty must of course be included. The remark was not and could not be intended to carry with it any personal allusion. But the students fancied that an attack was meant on an important official personage, and the professor was loudly cheered in consequence. The involuntary object of this homage told me that all the lectures were listened to chiefly with a view to the political allusions and the expressions of "liberalism" which it was hoped they would contain; and after a time the gratuitous lectures by university professors, like the universities and the Sunday-schools, were closed by superior order. One of the lecturers, Professor Pavloff, was sent to Siberia.

Signs of the newly-awakened spirit next manifested themselves in the Assemblies of the Nobility, which were held, early in 1862, at Moscow, St Petersburg, Toula, Tver Smolensk, and in all the large provincial towns (chief towns of "governments"), throughout Russia. At that time it could scarcely have been known in the west of Europe—probably many persons are unaware of it even now—that an organization already existed in Russia by which large bodies of land-owners could communicate their views in a direct manner to the Crown. Such an organization, however, had existed since the days of Catherine. It is true that but little advantage was taken of it. Under the Emperor

Nicholas, as in preceding reigns, the Russian nobles went quietly enough to Siberia when they were sent there; often without trial, sometimes without formal accusation. Nor was any attempt made to procure the replacement of mere arbitrary rule by a system of legality, except, indeed, from time to time through the medium of a conspiracy. For the most part the attitude of the Russian nobles was that of courtiers, content if now and then they received from their sovereign a decoration or a smile. They consoled themselves, perhaps, with the reflection that if they belonged to the Emperor, their serfs belonged to them—much as the serfs were said to revel in the idea that if they were their master's property, the land they cultivated was their own.

Under the Emperor Nicholas, the nobles used to meet in their assemblies once every three years to elect judges—a bad system, which the judicial reforms introduced in 1864 did away with; and “marshals,” whose duty it was to represent the wants of their fellow nobles to the sovereign. It is said that in practice the marshals of the nobility were only expected to give good entertainments.

With the emancipation of the peasantry, the nobles or landed proprietors found themselves placed in a new position, which was thus expressed at the time:—“A new class of free peasants, possessing a perfect system of self-government in the village communes, was being

formed beneath them ; a class numbering 23,000,000, in presence of which the nobility, with its merely nominal privileges, must in time lose all prestige, unless endowed with a sufficient amount of political power to enable it to keep its natural place at the head of society." It had to choose, moreover, between retaining certain exemptions, of no real importance, but calculated to excite the envy of other classes, and resigning these privileges while demanding rights for the nation in general.

When the time had arrived for the assemblies to be held, Mr. Valouieff, the Minister of the Interior, to prevent them from going too far in their demands, and also by way of paying them a certain amount of respect, gave them five questions to consider, and while asking for replies to these particular inquiries, begged them not to send any formal address to the Emperor. The Assemblies, however, of Moscow, St. Petersburg, Tver, Toula and Smolensk, all voted addresses, in which the formation of a national representative legislative assembly was expressly demanded ; not with the view of limiting the Tzar's power, but on the ground that under the existing system the true wants of the country were not known and could not be ascertained.

"In every rank of society," said the address voted by the Moscow nobility, "there is some sort of departure from law, and, in their true meaning, the laws are not observed. Neither persons nor property have any

protection against the will of the administration. Classes have risen one against another, and the enmity between them grows greater and greater in consequence of individual discontent, together with a general fear of a pecuniary catastrophe from a government financial crisis, indicated already by the instability of the unit of reckoning, an utter absence of credit, and, finally, by a multiplicity of false rumours which convulse the public mind. Such, in a few words, is the present state of things, and the Moscow nobility thinks it its duty to address the Emperor on the subject. The corner-stone on which all these evils rested—the right of holding serfs—has been taken away and destroyed, but much has yet to be done in order to reset the shaken edifice of the State on substantial foundations. To eradicate the bad, and to march in front, after its Emperor, in the path of peaceful reforms, such as shall satisfy the existing wants of society, restore a full measure of order, and avert, even in the future, all possible disturbances—this is the desire of the Moscow nobility ; and it addresses its Emperor in all confidence, and submits to his gracious inspection the following measures as calculated to rescue the country from its present difficult position :—

“ A greater extension to appointment by election in the government service, and also to local self-government. At the same time there must be a more strict fulfilment of the law, not only by the subordinates,

but also by the superior officials, with strict responsibility before the law for every one in the government service, each one being held accountable for his own actions.

“2. Protection for the rights of person and property of all the citizens of the empire, through the introduction of oral evidence in judicial proceedings and of trial by jury.

“3. The termination of the present antagonistic attitude between nobles and peasants, through the compulsory and immediate apportionment of the land.

“4. The publication of the government debt and of the government revenue and expenditure, so that the public mind may be quieted as to the prospect of a financial crisis.

“5. The freest discussion in print concerning reforms of all kinds, in connection with the forthcoming economical and administrative reforms.”

In an address voted unanimously by the nobles of the district assembly of Zvenigorod, in the Moscow government, the following passage occurred :—

“The only advice the nobles can offer to the government at the present juncture is that it should resort to the measure which has always been adopted in Russia in extreme cases both by the people and the Crown—namely, the formation at Moscow, the natural centre

of the country, of a National Representative Assembly, chosen from all classes and from all parts of the Empire."

The addresses in favour of a constitution were left without notice; but the "five questions" as to judicial reforms, publication of the budget, increased liberty of the press, and the promotion of local assemblies, having elicited the answers which had, no doubt, been anticipated, these answers were, it might be said, taken into account in the laws on the mooted subjects which were already in preparation; and which were soon afterwards published.

At the conclusion of the war against Turkey it seemed probable that the reform agitation, and especially the agitation in favour of a constitution, maintained with so much activity in 1861 and 1862, would be revived? In connection with the Alexander centenary, celebrated two years since at St. Petersburg, a Russian paper pointed out that the sovereign whose memory was being honoured had, among other great feats, freed Europe from the tyranny of Napoleon and replaced in France the rule of a despot by a constitutional system of government. Perhaps the journalist wished his readers to infer that what was such a good thing for France would not be altogether a bad thing for Russia. That, as a matter of fact, was what many officers of Alexander's army thought on their return from France; and the military

conspiracy which, at the end of 1825, took the form of open insurrection, was the natural consequence of Alexander's victorious march from Moscow to Paris. The defeats in the Crimea led to much more important changes than any that were caused by the success of the Russian armies in Germany and France. But these were changes introduced from above and originating in a conviction on the part of the Government that the country was weak and must have its resources developed in every direction. The most important reforms, moreover, of the present reign were the natural consequence of serf-emancipation which under Alexander I.—when serfdom still existed without any immediate prospect of being abolished in Galicia, Hungary, and various parts of Germany—was not likely to be viewed as a measure of indispensable necessity for Russia. Failure in war has so often been followed by beneficial changes at home that some Russians, more liberal than patriotic, are said to have desired the defeat of the Russian armies in Turkey so that, in presence of popular discontent, and its own proved incapacity to conduct the affairs of the nation, the Government might feel itself called upon to go through the well-known form of “granting a constitution.” Success in war proves, on the other hand, that the Government has at least been able to manage one important matter satisfactorily; and in the midst of the general joy of having vanquished an enemy the

victorious nation may forget that in its own country there are a few things which it would do well to conquer.

It was scarcely possible, however, that the officers of the Russian army in European Turkey could return home without bringing back recollections of the superior advantages enjoyed by the Roumanians and Servians as compared with themselves. Tributary States as Roumania and Servia are, or hitherto have been, they are at the same time constitutional States governed by laws which have been made by their own national representatives in Parliament assembled. Much has been said of late about the comfortable position of the Bulgarian peasantry, who are described as possessing material advantages which the Russians themselves are without. As the Bulgarians have been placed in a similar position to that which, until the war broke out, belonged to Servia and Roumania, they are already, in a political point of view, better off than the Russians, who not only do not make their own laws—which, practically, would matter very little if their laws were just, and justly administered—but are liable to be condemned under very unjust laws, and indeed without any law at all. It must certainly strike the Russians returning from the south as somewhat odd that the countries which they have done so much to liberate should be free with a freedom denied to their liberators. In Roumania and Servia the Chief of the

State can take no important step without consulting the Chamber; and such will now be the case in Bulgaria also. In Russia the Chief of the State need not consult anyone, and an address voted to the Emperor Alexander by the Council of State, just after the declaration of war against Turkey, is said to have begun with the words: "Having learned, Sire, from the newspapers that Russia is at war," &c.

In Roumania and Servia the annual budget is presented to the Chamber for discussion and approval. In Russia the budget is published—for Russia learned some fifteen years ago what Turkey had learned a few years earlier: that not to publish a budget is to lose all chance of contracting a foreign loan. But the budget in Russia is not subjected to the examination and control which it would meet with at the hands of a legislative chamber. Nor is there any possibility in Russia of criticising the acts of ministers and officials, such as exists in the minor States which, as some say, have been dragged by Russia, but which, as a matter of fact, followed Russia very readily into the war against the Turks. Finally, the giant State Russia differs from the little States which she has taken under her protection in that every Russian is liable by a simple administrative order—by a mere decree—to be arrested, imprisoned, confined to a particular spot, or sent to Siberia, without trial, accusation, or explanation of any kind; whereas in Servia and Roumania

people are neither accused nor punished without being brought to trial.

It is scarcely probable that after a war of liberation, engaged in under great difficulties and pursued at great sacrifices, the liberators will have the sad courage to go quietly home to remain in a state of political slavery, thanking Heaven that their *protégés* on the Danube and on both sides of the Balkans are enjoying political freedom. It is rather to be expected that they will return in the mood of those Russian officers who had made the campaign of France, and of whom a reactionary diplomatist wrote, when a number of them had taken ship for the Baltic, that, in the interest of Russia, it could now only be hoped that they would all go to the bottom. Liberty in France was not, after all, a Russian invention. But liberty in Roumania and Servia is mainly, if not entirely, due to Russia. If Russia had never moved since 1815 in the Balkan Peninsula, there is every reason for supposing that both Servians and Roumanians would at this moment be directly under the power of the Turks.

It was a much easier thing, however, to establish constitutionalism in Servia and Roumania—it will be much easier now to establish constitutionalism in Bulgaria—than it would be to introduce anything of the kind into Russia. In these new little States the crown is accepted with conditions known and stipulated for beforehand. In Russia, power actually rests with

the reigning sovereign, and it remains with him to say whether or not he will divest himself of a portion of it to intrust it to an assembly. Even if such an assembly existed, the Emperor might, if he thought fit, disregard its decisions; so difficult is it to establish limited monarchy in countries where no means exist for keeping the monarch's power within bounds.

If an emperor of Russia granted to his subjects the most perfect constitution ever devised, it would be open to him at any time to take it back, or, leaving it still in existence, to set it absolutely at naught. Nevertheless, a constitution, liable now and then to be violated, is better than no constitution at all; and a despotic sovereign, who accustoms himself, little by little, to share his responsibility with an assembly, may end by acquiring the habit permanently. He may find it convenient, and even safe, to refer questions to a representative body through which the views and feelings of his subjects generally can be arrived at.

The mere formation of a representative debating society would not in itself be any guarantee for individual freedom in Russia; since such an institution might exist side by side with the secret political police and the system of arbitrary arrests. But governments, like individuals, have often a conscience; and the right to criticise government acts—without which the existence of an assembly would be meaningless—would be a concession of real value. Many doubt as to whether

the introduction of constitutional government into Russia would be of much benefit to the empire. There can be no question, however, as to whether it would be of advantage to Europe. Those energetic men who, during the last few years, have been cultivating disaffection and directing revolts in Turkey, or planning the destruction of Austria through a general Slavonian uprising, would, under a parliamentary system, have seats in the chamber, when, instead of directing their energies against the foreigner in the interest of Russian dominion, they would tear one another to pieces with a view to office.

CHAPTER III.

SERF-EMANCIPATION AND SELF-GOVERNMENT.

TRAVELLERS in the interesting borderland between France and Germany may have noticed, in the inns and farmhouses of Alsace, a series of antiquated pictures, representing what the artist took to be the seven chief class-figures of society, and explaining how each managed to live. The emperor finds ample means of subsistence in the tribute which he levies everywhere, except on the lands of the nobility; for the nobleman at once comes forward, and pleads that he has "a free estate." As for the priest, he enjoys a tribute of his own, inasmuch as he "takes tithes." The Jew, mere trader that he is, makes known the disgraceful fact that he "lives by his profits." The soldier, seeing that he dates from the time of the Thirty Years' War, understates his case when he remarks, in language

which need not be disavowed by the soldier of the present day, that he "pays for nothing." The honest beggar says that he "has nothing;" upon which the overburdened peasant exclaims: "Lord have mercy upon me, for these six other men have all to be supported by me!" Everything, according to this view, comes out of the land: taxes, rent, tithes, the profits of the Jew, the rations of the soldier, and even the alms extorted by the beggar. The only man unable to get a living out of it is the unfortunate peasant by whom it is tilled; while, without counting the mysterious and profit-seeking "Jew," three orders of men live well by it: the sovereign; the nobility, followed by the soldiers, who "pay for nothing;" and the clergy, with the beggars in their train who "have nothing." Until very lately, the peasant of Russia was at least as badly off as the highly self-conscious peasant of Alsace in the ancient days when Alsace had not yet become French. Besides tithes to the priest, he still pays taxes to the emperor, which are not demanded of the nobleman with his "free estate"; and though, apart from military duty, he can no longer be required to render personal service to any one, he continues to pay for the right of cultivating his land, either with rent or with commuted rent in the form of a terminable annuity. He is free from Jews, except in Little Russia, and the provinces which at one time were either in union with Poland or formed an integral part of that

country; but he must submit to the mortification of having "profits" made out of him by traders of his own race and creed. Soldiers, too, on the march or in the season of manœuvres, may be quartered upon him; but if they still, in accordance with traditional habit, "pay for nothing," the cost of their maintenance is evenly distributed over the entire commune, or, in towns, over the municipality. With beggars, the Russian peasant has seldom been troubled; and in Russia the country beggar, whatever else he might pretend, could scarcely, under any circumstances, maintain that he "had nothing," since every peasant would be sure to have the use of from eight to ten acres of land.

Although serfdom in some shape existed less than a century ago in Alsace, and in France generally, and though it existed less than thirty years ago in many parts of Germany, and almost everywhere in the Austrian Empire, we should have to go back several centuries to find in Western Europe peasantry situated as badly as were the peasantry of Russia some fifty or sixty years since. Theoretically they were not only "attached to the soil," but were irremovable from it. Practically, however, they were sold like cattle; and as recently as the reign of Alexander I. advertisements appeared in the *Gazette of the Academy*, to the effect that peasants, apart from land, would on stated days be put up to auction. Their position was unfortunate

enough as fixed by law. But, in addition to that, they were illegally treated. On many estates, long after the Emperor Paul had restricted the peasants' task-work to three days in the week, they were compelled to labour six, and even seven days, for the sole benefit of the proprietor. Alexander's numerous edicts in favour of the serf were disregarded, and sometimes (as in the case above referred to of sales by auction) disregarded quite openly. The Emperor Nicholas's law against the breaking up of peasants' families when inheritances were to be divided, or when estates for other reasons changed hands, was equally set at naught; and all sorts of abuses existed as a natural consequence of the fact that the administration of justice on estates was exercised in small matters by the proprietors as such, in matters of importance by judges chosen by the proprietors from among those of their body who would consent to fill an office to which no honour was attached, and which only repaid the holder by the opportunity it afforded him of taking bribes. No amelioration, indeed, of the position of the Russian peasants would have been of much avail, had it not been accompanied by a complete reform of the Russian judicial system.

But leaving aside all questions of injustice, the legal position of the Russian peasant, up to the period of his emancipation fourteen years ago, or rather up to the publication of the anticipatory law on the subject,

was strikingly like that of a slave. Though recruitment was effected as a rule by lot, a proprietor could send to the army any peasant he chose to select. Without assigning the least reason, he had only to inform the Government of his wish to despatch a peasant to Siberia, and further to supply an outfit, and a small sum of money for travelling expenses, in order to get the unfortunate man exiled for the rest of his life. A proprietor could, moreover, impose a particular marriage on a serf, or prevent his getting married. He could make the serf work without wages ; and he could subject him to arbitrary punishments for any sort of offence, or for no offence at all.

If a history of serf emancipation in Russia should some day be published, it will be seen that so long ago as 1844 the first steps were taken, as if unconsciously, towards that important measure. The proprietors of Lithuania had for the most part joined in the Polish insurrection of 1830. Their peasants had for the most part abstained from doing so ; and the Russian Government, determined to watch over the interests of the peasants, and to let them understand where their friends were to be found, required that the proprietors should guarantee them certain rights, and should do so, moreover, in a formal manner. After much delay, it was ordered that a system of "inventories" should be prepared, showing on each estate what duties, as in the shape of task-work, the peasants had to perform

and what extent of land they were in return to hold for their own use. Committees were appointed to draw up the inventories. But many difficulties presented themselves. Perhaps, too, the proprietors objected to the formally prescribed relations which, by the inventory system, would exist between themselves and their peasantry, with, in case of disagreement, a friendly Government for the latter to refer to. The proprietors in any case showed themselves in favour of a total cessation of relations with the peasantry. In other words, they recommended the liberation of the peasant; and it is said that the Emperor Nicholas had serious thoughts of undertaking some such measure when the revolutions of 1848 broke out and at once threw him back on the reactionary policy which he had followed consistently enough for three-and-twenty years. The Crimean war, however, and the inability of Russia to meet the strain which was then put upon her, convinced the despotic Nicholas that he must yield; and in his last instructions to his son, the present emperor, he enjoined him above all things to emancipate the peasantry.

The first signs after the accession of Alexander II., that emancipation was at least contemplated, were to be found in the permission given to the partly-emancipated press to enlarge on the evils of serfdom. At first the subject was dealt with in tales and chronicles,

rather than in directly critical essays. Then the question of emancipation was brought forward at the provincial meetings of landed proprietors, or “assemblies of the nobility”; and the Emperor Alexander had only been a few years on the throne when the nobility of Grodno (Lithuania) made a formal proposition, in the shape of a petition, for liberating the peasantry. Several of the Russian nobiliary assemblies, among others those of St. Petersburg, Tver, and Tula, followed suit. But the proprietors in all these provinces or “governments, were in favour, not of liberating the peasant with his land, but of liberating him from his land; of giving him the freedom of the birds and taking his land for themselves. To this the Government could not possibly consent. However just the claim of the proprietor might seem in the abstract, there was the history of the abolition of serfdom in neighbouring countries, the history of the gradual diminution of the serf’s burden in Russia itself, to show that, although the serf might be called upon to redeem his land before he could call it absolutely his own, yet he could not, under any circumstances, be deprived of it. Much controversy took place at the time between Russian publicists as to whether the land cultivated by the peasants, and reserved from generation to generation for their use, ought in a just scheme of emancipation to be regarded as their absolute property. The question fairly considered was never a very difficult one; and it was

certain from the first that the Russian Government would adopt, in principle, the solution arrived at by the Prussian Government in Posen (as previously in Prussia generally), and by the Austrian Government in Hungary and Galicia. But the question was a dangerous one while it lasted, from the opportunity which it afforded to the revolutionary party of asserting the peasant's absolute right to the land he cultivated for his own use, and of representing the task-work, or the rent in lieu of task-work required from him, as so much money or labour extorted from the long-suffering peasant by a cruel proprietor whose days were now numbered. The peasant's traditional remark to his master, "I belong to you, but the land belongs to me," used to be much quoted at the time, as though the paradoxical saying admitted of no answer. The master might, by way of repartee, have sent his too ingenious serf to Siberia or to the army, which would at once have shown him, not only that the land did not belong to him, but that he did not even belong to the land from which he could so promptly be separated. In all good faith, too, he could have replied to his peasantry, as a body, that although by tradition their land belonged to them, yet equally by tradition their labour, within limits, or money in lieu of it, belonged to him.

The following, in the majority of cases, and in the middle regions of Russia, where the land is of average fertility, was the situation of peasants with regard to

the proprietor. About one-third of the estate was kept by the proprietor, and had to be cultivated for his benefit by the peasants, who kept for their own use the remaining two-thirds. Thus the peasants paid for their holdings in labour. On some estates, however, in lieu of labour they gave money, so that the land they called their own did not, in either case, belong to them unconditionally. In the Law of Emancipation—an elaborate document of which the abridged edition would fill about two volumes of an ordinary novel or book of travels—particulars are incidentally given of the position of every kind of serf in the Russian empire at the moment of publication : whether a domestic, an operative, or an agricultural serf ; whether a member of a commune, or the holder of an individual allotment ; whether a serf of the Western Provinces (detached at the end of the last century from Poland), or of Great Russia, or of Little Russia ; whether a cultivator of the first zone without black soil, or of the second zone with black soil, or of the third zone—region of the steppes—with whatever soil he could manage to get ; whether on the system of *barschtchina* or task-work, or of *obrok* or rent.

But in order to keep within bounds, and to avoid becoming unintelligible through the introduction of a multiplicity of details, it will be better to speak only of agricultural peasants forming communes, and cultivating land of ordinary fertility in Russia proper. It

has been said that the peasants retained for their own use two-thirds of the estate to which they belonged. This gave as a rule to each member of the commune, or in other words to each male adult, about eight or nine acres of fields; in addition to which each head of a family had a cottage, a stable, and a garden. When in place of three days' labour each week, the peasant paid an annual rent, the amount was usually fixed at eight or nine roubles a year; so that in Great Russia the rent-paying peasant may be said to have held his land at the rate of about a rouble an acre.

The first object of the Government in preparing the emancipation of the peasant was to fix by law his relations to the proprietor during a period of transition extending from 1863 to 1870. The proprietors of estates were required to make out charts, showing what land was cultivated for their own use and what for the use of the peasants. The peasants' land was in no case to be diminished; but portions of it might be exchanged to suit the convenience of the proprietor under fair conditions, and with the consent of magistrates, appointed under the name of "peace arbiters," to settle such differences between peasants and proprietors as were sure to arise. During the transition period the rent or *obrok* of peasants who lived under that system could not be raised; and peasants—not individually, but in communes—were empowered, with or without

the consent of proprietors, to pass from the task-work to the rent-paying system at a rate fixed beforehand, in accordance with the rates prevailing in the locality. If the peasants wished to redeem their land, or if the proprietor wished them to redeem it, the Government would in either case advance redemption-money in the form of bills bearing interest at 5 per cent., which were to be exchanged at intervals and in order determinable by lottery, for bank-notes. If the peasants proposed to redeem their holdings, the proprietor was to receive the full estimated value of the land; of which the peasants themselves were to contribute 20 per cent., while the Government gave bills for the remainder. If, on the other hand, the demand for redemption came from the proprietor, he had to submit to a loss of 20 per cent., but, as in the other case, received bills for 80 per cent. from the Government.

The estimated value of the land to be redeemed was the fixed rent or *obrok* multiplied by $16\frac{2}{3}$, or, in other words, capitalized at 6 per cent. But as the proprietor had generally mortgaged his estate to the Government, he had, in that case, to content himself with bills for the estimated value of the land redeemed minus his debt.

In calculating the amount received by the proprietors, it is necessary to bear in mind that the bank-notes by which the Government bills were to be replaced were not worth more than 80 per cent. of their nominal

value. After deducting the amount of the proprietor's outstanding debt, the Government gave him 20 per cent. less than the estimated value of the land he ceded, in paper replaceable by notes worth 20 per cent. less than the sums they represented. Thus in the end, apart from all question of debt, he received only 64 per cent.—or four-fifths of 80—on the estimated value of the land. If this was somewhat of a deception to him, he, on his part, may be said to have deceived the Government, which had imagined that the sums it handed over to the proprietors would be spent in the improvement of their estates, and not in entertainments at St. Petersburg and in foreign tours. Yet, bearing all this in mind, one can safely say that the proprietors have gained even in a pecuniary point of view, by the emancipation. The new railways through the corn-growing districts have doubtless had something to do with it. The value of land has, in any case, gone up immensely during the last few years, both in Central and in Southern Russia.

The effect, however, of the Emancipation Act has been far more satisfactory for the peasants and for serfs of all kinds. Serfs without land, hiring themselves out as operatives, artisans, or as domestic servants, or perhaps keeping shops, used to pay so many roubles a year to their proprietors for the privilege of earning their own living. All right to levy this *obrok*, which here assumed the form of a personal tax, ceased on

March 3, 1863, two years after the publication of the Emancipation Act. As for the agricultural serfs, with whose position and organization we are chiefly concerned, they have found themselves, in constantly increasing numbers, placed towards the Government in almost the same economical relation which formerly they held towards their proprietors, but with these two points in their favour: that they pay less money to the Government, and that their annual payments are counted not as rent, but as instalments in extinction of a debt which, with the interest upon it, will be paid off in forty-nine years from the date of its being contracted. In these cases the peasants have absolutely no relations with their former proprietors except those of neighbours. Nor has the paternal rule of the proprietors, with the abuses to which it was liable, been replaced by that of the Government. On the contrary, the peasants are encouraged and enabled to govern themselves, which they do absolutely in regard to their own village affairs; while they moreover take part in the local government of those groups of villages which the French would call *cantons*, of those larger divisions of a province which may be called "districts," and of the province itself.

This Russian peasant has been much idealized. "This slave, this drunkard," cried Alexander Herzen—degrading him a little, in order soon afterwards to elevate him a great deal; "this slave, this drunkard,

in his smoky hut, with his pine-wood candle, has solved the social problem so puzzling to the philosophers of Western Europe." The Russian peasantry are often, in fact, said to have discovered, or at least to have preserved, the secret of holding and cultivating landed property in common. As a matter of fact, they hold their land in common, but they do not so cultivate it; neither, as a natural consequence, do they share its produce. Their communism resolves itself, indeed, merely into this: that, apart from the garden or inclosure belonging to each house, which remains individual property, the fields and meadows of a village community are parcelled out at intervals of so many years among the various male adults composing it. In a perfect system of communism the industrious man would work for the idle one. But in a Russian commune the hard-working peasant, even in a condition of serfdom, got much from his land, and became rich; whereas the lazy peasant got but little, and sometimes at sowing-time found himself without seed, or the means of procuring it. Thus rich and poor are found together in Russian communes, as everywhere else in the world. But even the poorest member of a Russian commune is not destitute. He may till his land carelessly, or he may neglect to till it. He cannot in any case be deprived of it. Each new year will give him once more his piece of land, which will be greater or less, not according to his

industry or capabilities, but according as the numbers of the commune have diminished or increased in number since the previous year. Political economists deplore this condition of things, which is indeed incompatible with the progress of agriculture towards that great good, the maximum of production. In any rational community where property existed as a reality, the idle, or, it might be, feeble or awkward peasant would soon be parted from his land, which would fall into the hands of the strong, rich, and industrious peasant; and the village would in due time produce at least one capitalist and many paupers. The Russian communal system is bad for agriculture as an art, but it prevents the formation of a class of proletarians. It renders it difficult for a well-to-do peasant to become a prosperous farmer; though, if he saves money, a peasant may, independently of his communal portion, rent or purchase land for himself inalienably. But it saves the ne'er-do-well peasant from starvation.

Next to the question of the peasant's right to the land he had been in the habit of cultivating for his own use, no question was more warmly discussed, in connection with emancipation, than that of the propriety of maintaining the commune.

"The first thing to do," said some writers whom their opponents called "Conservatives"—though on this point they were progressive enough—the first thing to do is to dissolve the commune, and develop

among the peasants notions of individual property to which they are comparatively strangers.”

“If you touch the commune,” said the stationary Liberals—not from love of antiquity, but rather from a passion for modern socialism—“you destroy the one thoroughly Russian institution we possess, and the germ of that democratic Russia of the future in which every man will have his own plot of land!”

The so-called Conservatives, who would have placed the peasants in the position of rent-paying farmers, each with his own individual, purchasable, and vendable portion of land, pointed out that the commune had nothing peculiarly Russian in it, that it had existed everywhere in primitive times, and that in Russia the Government had maintained it simply for fiscal purposes, and because it was easier to collect money from villages regarded as units, with one chief or “elder” responsible for the whole community, than from millions of families. To this it was replied, that whatever the commune might have been in its origin, it had ceased to exist in every part of Europe except Russia; and that, for whatever reasons it might have been kept up in Russia, it suited the country, and, considering the abundance of land, might still be maintained, and even extended, to the great advantage of the Russian people.

The Russian communal system, in short, renders pauperism impossible, which is, after all, the main

object of West-European communism : "the religion of poverty," as some one has called it.

The Russian Government can never for a moment have thought of abolishing the commune. Apart from the taxation difficulty, one organic change at a time would naturally be deemed enough. There were many points in the Emancipation Law which the peasants might possibly misunderstand ; and it would have been most imprudent to introduce unnecessary complications, such as a fundamental change in the communal system must inevitably have brought about. The Government, too, may well have determined for State reasons, apart from all considerations of political economy, to preserve an institution which postponed indefinitely the plague of pauperism, and guaranteed the country, except in times of famine, against the formation of hungry mobs.

The village communities of Russia, forced to act collectively and to deal collectively through an elected chief, both with the Government and with the proprietor, had, of old, been accustomed to deliberate on their own affairs, and in some measure to regulate them. But it depended on the proprietor, whether effect should be given to their decisions or not ; and the peasantry were also, in respect to numerous matters, at the mercy of the local police. At present, neither proprietor nor police can say a word to them. They keep order and administer justice in their own village, and form rural guards for protecting it against the

attacks of robbers and the incursions of wild beasts. They not only apportion the taxes payable to the Crown, which they were equally called upon to do in their former condition, but are empowered to raise money from among themselves for village improvements and for the establishment of village schools.

They even possess a privilege which by a small party is still coveted in vain for parishes in England ; that, namely, of deciding by a majority of votes whether or not public-houses shall be kept open. But if they are their own licensing magistrates, it is to be feared that they look with too kindly an eye on the tavern-keepers who come before them to ask for renewals. The advocates of female suffrage will be interested to hear, that were the decision of the question left to the women of the commune it would certainly be given against the publican. Indeed, though legally the women have no voice in the government of the village, they sometimes take upon themselves to protest against the resolutions passed by their husbands in favour of keeping open the spirit-shops ; and an address in this sense was agreed to four years ago by the women of Olkhovo, a village of Novgorod, and duly forwarded to the governor of that province. “Whereas,” said the unhappy women (their petition was published in the *Golos*, or *Voice*, of St. Petersburg)—“whereas our husbands have empowered Karnila Lushin to keep open a public-house during the year 1875, we hereby certify

that Karnila Lushin first made them drunk with brandy. Consequently our children have no bread, we have sometimes no cattle, no homes, and for a long time we have paid no *obrok* to our landlords. Our husbands are intoxicated not only on holidays, but all the week through. At the same time, we and our children, who can work, have no rest for gaining our bread. We are reduced to the necessity of electing our peasant-wife Matrona Savelieva as a deputy to the highest authorities, that she may ask them to do us the benefit to cancel this act of our husbands."

In other parts of Russia the women have shown a similar disposition to take affairs into their own hands, and, sometimes, on similar provocation. In the province of Kalouga, however, as stated by the local *Gazette*, so many men are absent from the villages, that if their wives and mothers who remain at home were not to take part in the communal assemblies, nothing could be done. It would even be impossible to form the legal quorum of thirteen, which in one village was composed of five men and eight women. According to this authority, the presence of a majority of women in the assembly has an excellent effect. "The women," says the *Kalouga Gazette*, "do not drink, like the men, and cannot, like them, be corrupted by liquor." At a village in the district of Taross, a man, presumably unfitted for the office of churchwarden, to which he aspired, gave drink to the male peasants,

and gained their votes. But the women of the village did not drink, and seeing what sort of a man he was, rejected him. The journalist further affirms that a retired soldier, arriving at the district town of Taross to draw his pension, and having to present a certificate of identity from the assembly of his village, produced one on which the signatures were for the most part those of women.

Village assemblies, however, are at the bottom of the scale of self-governing organizations; and whatever good may be done by women at these communal meetings, they would not be admitted to the assemblies of *volosts*, or groups of villages, at which the village communities are represented by deputies.

Next above the assemblies of *volosts*, or cantons, are the district assemblies, which are composed of members elected from among the landed proprietors of the district, who form one-half of the assembly; members elected by the district town; and members elected by the peasantry. Peasants, townspeople, and proprietors sit together, deliberate, and vote on all matters connected with local taxation, the raising of certain taxes payable to the State, the making and repairing of roads, the establishment and maintenance of hospitals, sanitary matters of all kinds, and the formation and direction of schools. It is worthy of observation, that the first training-school established in Russia was formed, not by the Government, but by one of the

district assemblies of Novgorod. The Government, however, was not long in profiting by the example.

Some functions of the district assembly are obligatory. Thus, it is bound to keep up the roads of the district. As regards its voluntary action, all decisions come to by the assembly must be submitted to the governor of the province. Some of these may be put into execution without the governor's consent. But others, before they can be acted upon, must receive his final approval; and in case of this being refused, the matter is referred to the Senate (a sort of High Court of Appeal), which has hitherto almost invariably supported the assembly.

For the construction of roads and railways, the assemblies are empowered to raise money, either by taxation, or by loan secured on the rateable property of the district. The guarantee of the assembly, resting as it does on a very solid basis, is asked for by contractors in preference to that of the Government, which, however, must sanction the assembly's guarantee to make it perfectly valid.

In the various district assemblies are elected members of a central assembly, representing the whole province. Both provincial assemblies and assemblies of districts appoint executive committees, which sit permanently; and it is hoped that some day the provincial assemblies may be allowed to send deputies to form a consultative, if not a legislative assembly, at

St. Petersburg. The nearest approach yet made towards this desired end is to be seen in the fact that the Government already, from time to time, communicates to the district assemblies its intention to pass a law on such and such a basis ; so that instances have occurred of the same governmental project being discussed by three or four hundred different assemblies. The Government in no way binds itself to act upon the views expressed by the assemblies, or even to attach weight to them. But it cannot but find in these representative bodies a convenient means of ascertaining the opinions and feelings of the country ; and a few years since, when it had formed the project of imposing a house-tax in lieu of the personal tax now levied, the idea was found to be so unpopular in the assemblies that it was thought advisable to abandon it.

That the peasants are not yet equal to the duties required from them is sufficiently evident ; and of the four orders of assemblies, the least satisfactory is the lowest, or village assembly, in which we have seen that the members are sometimes* bribed with drink, and being

* A friend well acquainted with Russian country life, assures me that in some villages the peasants have closed the tavern. The hard-working members of the commune know that the idle and vicious members will be unable, if the spirit-shop is kept open, to contribute their share of the rent or of the annual instalments in reduction of the debt for redemption money to the Crown, which

drunk, vote incontinently that the drinking-shops shall be kept open. But in the superior peasant-assembly of the *volost*, or group of villages, things are already much better; and certain qualifications are now necessary on the part of peasants wishing to be elected to the assembly of the *volost*. They must, for instance, be twenty-five years of age, of good conduct, and free from debt; while, at a later period, it is to be further required of them that they shall have finished an educational course at a village school.

One would think that the newly liberated peasant could scarcely prove a good juryman; though apart from a fixed determination not to return a verdict of guilty against persons who are only accused of not having their passports in order, his behaviour in the

are claimed, not from each peasant individually, but from the village as a whole. They therefore endeavour, and in some cases have done so with success, to secure a majority of votes against the unestimable persons who apply annually to the Communal Assembly for spirit licenses. Thus the system of collective responsibility has certain moral advantages. It obliges the prudent to watch over the imprudent to the benefit of both. The temperate peasant has possibly no abstract horror of intemperance; but he dislikes having to pay dues for the intemperate man. If it could be shown that the existence of public-houses in England had a considerable effect in increasing the Poor Rate, that would furnish at least an argument for considering the licensing laws in force among the newly-emancipated serfs of Russia, from whom Mr. Herzen was right in thinking there is yet something to be learned.

box is said to have been, on the whole, commendable. The Russian jury is formed of men of all classes. But an attempt has more than once been made to exclude the peasantry, on the ground that jurymen are often required to travel considerable distances, that it would be unbecoming to compensate them for the expense they are thus forced to incur, and that without such compensation the functions of jurymen must be beyond the peasant's resources. The liberals are in favour of repaying to jurymen their necessary disbursements. The Minister of Justice once proposed that a list should be drawn up of men qualified and able by their pecuniary position to serve—which, it was objected, might easily have the effect of placing a number of picked jurymen at the service of the Government. Civil cases, however, are tried without juries. So also are political cases in which, without having been tried as criminals, the convicted are quite liable to be punished as such.

With the sole exception of political cases, which may or may not be heard with closed doors, all trials and legal proceedings in Russia are public. The courts, too, are open in which rural justice is administered; an innovation which, like the whole reform of the Russian judicial system, dates from soon after the emancipation of the serfs, of which it was the necessary accompaniment. To understand what the Russian judicial system was before the emancipation, the reader should turn to Schtchedrin's *Provincial Sketches*, which have

been translated into English ; or to Prosper Mérimée's French translation of Gogol's admirable comedy of *Revisor* ; the "revisor" being a Government inspector whose business it was to watch the working of the administrative machine, and, if possible, not to accept bribes from the persons interested when he found—as he was sure everywhere to do—that it was going wrong.

The first independent judges appointed in Russia were the so-called "peace-arbiters," whose duty it was, during the "transition period," to settle disputes between peasants and proprietors. The peace-arbiters were selected by the governor from lists of names presented by the proprietors in each province ; and the best educated men in the country were glad to accept this not lucrative but honourable and, in Russia, quite novel position. The governor of the province of Kaluga, in making his selection, passed over all who had not been educated at a university ; and for following this rule, of his own devising, received the thanks of the Emperor. Under the old system the judges were as ignorant as they were venal. Gogol's judge in *Revisor* turns his court into a dog-kennel, and, whip in hand, sells his decisions to the highest bidder ; and a Russian friend assures me that he knew a judge who could only prepare his reports for the Minister of Justice by going over with a pen what his clerk had previously written in pencil.

The peace-arbiters were entirely independent of the administration, and, as a rule, the only charge brought against them was that of being inclined, in arranging differences, to take part with the peasants.

Rural justice is now administered by "peace-judges," who must be owners of property in Russia, and must have finished their education—must have passed, that is to say, what the Germans call the "abiturient," or leaving examination—at a gymnasium or military school. They are elected by the assemblies for a term of three years; and the educational condition can only be waived in case of their being elected unanimously. They receive about two hundred pounds a year in small towns, and as much as eight hundred pounds a year in large ones; and are assisted by "honorary judges" equally elected, whose duties are not more arduous than those of our county magistrates. In each district sits at fixed intervals a court of appeal, composed of the peace-judges of the whole district, from whose decisions there is no further appeal, except, on a question of form or on a point of law, to the Senate.

Without political liberty, without even the slightest guarantee for personal freedom—every one in Russia being liable to secret arrest on a mere order of the administration—the Russians, nevertheless, possess a tolerably complete system of local self-government. It must be admitted that when, a few years ago, an

ex-minister was visited with an administrative order, in obedience to which he retired to his estate, the fact was soon afterwards notified to the world through the columns of the official journal. The publicity given to the act deprived it of what at first seemed to be its worst feature. It remains true all the same that the Russian Government is, in principle, perfectly despotic ; that it occasionally exhibits this principle in practice ; and that it allows neither the Russian people nor the Russian nobility, nor any class or order of Russians, the least share in the government of the country. On the other hand, it has in the course of the last eighteen years made a great many bold and generally successful experiments in the direction of liberty ; and though there can be no question in Russia of liberty “broadening down”—since it is precisely in the highest regions that the absence of liberty is most observable—yet it may in time “narrow-up,” as self-government really has done, from the village assemblies of peasants, to the district assemblies in which all classes are represented ; and from the district assemblies to the more important assemblies of entire provinces.

It is obvious in what manner the unfinished edifice of self-government may some day be crowned. But of the formation of a Central Imperial Assembly, composed of deputies elected by the provincial assemblies, there is as yet neither promise nor direct sign.

CHAPTER IV.

SOME PRACTICAL EFFECTS OF SERF EMANCIPATION.

IN 1872 an Imperial Commission, under the presidency of Mr. Walouieff, Minister of Domains, was appointed in order to inquire into the condition of agriculture in Russia. The director of the Department of Agriculture at St. Petersburg stated at a public dinner that the Commission had been appointed in consequence of the statements made in Mr. Thomas Michell's report on land tenure in Russia. He observed that the Government had been inclined to disbelieve the statements made in that report, but that the Imperial Commission had arrived at almost an identical conclusion. It may be added that the publication of Mr. Michell's report was viewed with great displeasure by the Russian Government, and that the Russian newspapers were not allowed to make any reference to it.

The Imperial Commission reported as follows in 1873:—"All the information and evidence obtained by the Commission points to a considerable development in the observance by the peasantry of holidays which are not established by the Church, and which reduce, to the prejudice of the productiveness of the country and the moral interests of the people, the sum-total of working days available for agriculture. It is supposed that the clergy not only fail to hinder an increase in the number of holidays but that they even promote that increase. In addition to the waste of time that would otherwise be available for labour, those holidays are accompanied by another evil—namely, by an augmentation of the frequency of cases in which the use of alcoholic drinks is abused. As regards the statements made to the Commission on the subject of the development of a baneful passion for drink among the agricultural classes, and with respect to the injurious influence of idleness and drunkenness on peasant life and generally on the peasant economy, the Commission must first of all direct attention to the fact that the complaints on the subject of drunkenness refer principally to the provinces of Great Russia, considerably less to those of Little Russia, and scarcely at all to the Western and Baltic provinces. In the provinces of Great Russia drunkenness prevails not only in an individual but also in a public form. The incentive to such drunkenness is to be found not only in the numerous

‘family’ and ‘church’ holidays, but also in the forms of rural self-government. Few village (communal) meetings terminate without scenes of drunkenness. Business is settled at those meetings under the influence of ‘treating with vodka’ (corn brandy). Fines are imposed in the form of vodka. Such facts, even if desultory in their occurrence, prove that the passion for drink has taken deep root in the national character, and that the people look upon drunkenness from a peculiar point of view, without in the least recognizing its moral indecency.”

The following is an abstract of the evidence given before the Imperial Commission in reply to the question, “Is a decrease of morality observable amongst the peasantry, and is there a falling off in the performance of their religious duties?” Unfortunately a falling off in morality is very apparent, and proceeds from an increased use of spirits. The peasants only respect the property of others when it is impossible for them to enjoy it with immunity from punishment.* In the Volokokama district of the province of Moscow, “the people have given themselves up entirely to drink, and are morally corrupted, so that no confidence can be placed in them. There is no respect for the rights of property; robbery is daily on the increase; horse-stealing has assumed frightful proportions.” In the

* Provinces of Simbirsk and Kasan.

province of Moscow, "the churches are empty, the drinking-shops are full. In one village church which used to be frequented by one hundred and fifty to two hundred men are now to be seen only two or three old women; in another village the entire population has gone over to Dissent. The influence of the clergy is in a state of continual decadence. The priesthood is little imbued with the sacredness of its mission; it presents not the slightest example of morality, is frequently given to drink, and does not even comply with the most elementary ordinances of the Church. Thus it frequently happens that no mass is performed on the day set apart for that purpose. From such a clergy it is impossible to expect any moral influence over the people. In the peasant's life is entirely wanting that moral element which is indispensable for the further development of a nation. It is impossible to disconnect morality from religion; but when religion appears in such a form, what effect can it have in softening the manners and customs of a people?"

From the province of Tula the evidence was as follows:—"The level of morality has fallen considerably. The peasantry very seldom frequent the churches. It is chiefly women with children brought for the administration of the sacrament that are to be seen in the churches. This is from want of civilization. Stealing timber is considered no sin. Holidays are on the increase, because there is no one to compel the pea-

santry to work. The holidays are not kept from purely religious motives ; there is a general demoralization."

The province of Yaroslaf is reported to be in the following condition:—"Morality is decidedly on the decrease, and religious observances are performed with considerably less zeal. The cause of this is the continual increase of drunkenness, the splitting up of families, and also because the peasants spend the greater part of the year in earning a livelihood at St. Petersburg and Moscow, from whence they return with little that is useful or good for their domestic life. The clergy are unfortunately not equal to their mission. Having no fixed means of existence, the village priest supports himself by collections, and his whole care is to collect from the peasantry as much money or as large a quantity of agricultural produce as he possibly can during the course of the year. It happens not unfrequently that the priests are not sober when performing the offices of religion." "In all three provinces" (Yaroslaf, Tver, and Kostroma), said another witness, "the peasantry go less to church ; their moral condition is on the decline. Many of them visit St. Petersburg, where they hear a few things, and return imbued with a spirit of criticism, if not in respect to religion, at any rate as regards the clergy. Meanwhile the latter remain in the same condition (if, indeed, they are not in a worse condition

than formerly), so that they exercise no good influence over the peasantry."

The state of things in the province of Kostroma is thus described by another witness—"Holidays and drunkenness have caused a decline in morality. Robbery is so developed that a wife robs her husband, the children their parents, and the stolen goods are carried to the dram-shop."

A witness from Kief stated—"The peasants have become poorer owing to excessive drunkenness. The population may be divided into those who sell drink and those who consume it. Entire anarchy reigns. Everything is done for vodka and by vodka."

Mr. Aksakoff, the eminent Panslavist, deposed as follows in respect to the provinces of Simbirsk, Penza, Samara, and Ufa :—"A decline in morality and a falling off in the performance of religious duties are very apparent among the peasantry. The principal causes are first, the very small moral influence which the clergy exercise over the rural population, owing both to their material dependence upon the peasantry, and also very frequently to an insufficient appreciation of their own dignity and of the sacredness of their office ; secondly, the absence of schools, and consequently the absence of all civil and religious instruction ; thirdly, the absence of the influence of the church and the school, and its replacement by the influence of the dram-shop.

Drunkenness is immeasurably on the increase and is destroying the Russian people, physically and morally."

The report from the provinces of Voronej and Tambof is no less alarming :—"The village mayors are entirely in the hands of the populace, which has no confidence in them. The mayor stands uncovered before the village assembly, and is sometimes forced to retire to a dram-shop together with the rest of the villagers. As a police-officer, the mayor of a village is only the instigator or the agent through whom all police regulations are systematically evaded. Such a state of things may be called an entire absence of government. It keeps the peasantry in their present path of 'self-will' (lawlessness), leads to the absence of all public order and decorum, to depravity, robbery, drunkenness, &c. Moral dissolution, utter impoverishment and bankruptcy of the taxpayer—these are the final results of the present state of affairs. The rights of property were never very strictly observed by the peasantry, and it is the same now. Crimes against those rights are not only daily but hourly on the increase. Their number cannot be estimated from the cases that are tried, because an immense proportion of crimes go unpunished, owing to the difficulties that surround the obtaining of legal evidence."

A similar difficulty appears to exist in the provinces of Ekaterinoslaf and Kherson, where "no redress can be obtained from magistrates in cases of theft, incendiarism, &c. The peasantry have scarcely any respect

whatever for the rights of property, and when they have it is only from a fear of being fined."

Another witness from the province of Kherson stated :—“ We have several incorrigible thieves in each village who live by nothing but robbery ; and nothing can be done with them, for it costs too much to send them out of the commune, and their prosecution would be extremely difficult.”

A landed proprietor in the province of Kursk (South Russia) stated :—“ A decline in the moral condition of the peasantry has been produced by an increase in the number of dram-shops. The peasant does not drink vodka every day, but when he does drink he indulges until he becomes unconscious. For drink, he spends his last copeik, pawns everything he possesses, and then gets into debt. When accused of a delinquency he pleads insensibility from drink. Among the Old Believers (Dissenters) the decline of morality and religion is less apparent.” From another source the Imperial Commission ascertained that, at all events in one locality in the province of Kursk, a decrease of drunkenness had been observed as well as a general improvement in morality among the working classes. “Stealing has become less frequent,” and what the witness was astonished at was that, “while morality is improving, the observance of religious duties is not at all on the increase. On the contrary, it may be said that the working classes have become more indifferent

to the observance of those duties. This may in part be attributed to the carelessness of the clergy in certain localities, partly owing also to the peasantry attaching greater value to time, for they now pass some of the holidays in working, although not generally."

The following testimony was given in respect to the ancient Russian province of Vladimir:—"It is known that the lower classes only observe the outward forms of religion. After listening to the liturgy they entirely forget what they have heard in church. In this respect, it is important to observe that the servants of the Church confine themselves to the performance of religious rites, and, not rising above the people in intellectual development, they give way to exactly the same acts which form so painful a feature in peasant life; so that the rural population, with no example to guide them in the path of morality, are not able to withstand temptation. A reduction in the number of dram-shops and a strict supervision over those whose duty it is to propagate morality appear to be indispensable measures."

"Our priests," said a witness from the province of Ekaterinoslaf, "are even less civilized than the peasantry. They likewise give way to drink, and are in the highest degree imbued with a love of gain. Consequently they have a pernicious effect on the morality of the peasants, who scarcely visit the churches at all, owing particularly to the great distances, and partly from

laziness. The peasants commence a holiday from early morn in the dram-shop."

A sweeping condemnation of the Russian clergy came from the province of Chernigof (South Russia):—"A great indifference of the peasantry towards the Church is observable. The Archbishop appealed personally for the formation of a Church fund, but the peasants refused to contribute, and said they were quite agreeable to their church being closed. Having inquired into this subject in several localities, I have arrived at the conviction that an indifference towards religion exists among the peasantry to such an extent that it is extremely desirable that attention should be bestowed upon it, for in the absence of religion a man mentally undeveloped can scarcely be a trustworthy citizen. However, I do not say this as a reproach to the peasantry, who are now developing themselves in a civil respect. I have only stated a fact taken from real life, and have made a direct deduction from it. As regards the influence of the clergy over the people, the former are certainly interested in counteracting such an indifference towards the Church; but the strength of the clergy is unequal to the task. They owe their material welfare to the peasantry, receiving from them payment for every rite which they perform. Although the parishioners are allowed to elect their own priests, yet the conditions laid down with that object are somewhat onerous for a rural commune. Thus, the

salary of a priest is fixed at a very considerable figure in relation to the means of the greater number of the rural communes, and over and above this an obligatory rate of payment is fixed for the performance of certain rites which the peasantry do not wish to have celebrated, such as prayers before fasts, &c. I was an eye-witness when a certain large commune was invited to elect a priest. The peasants said outright that, as they had been granted the right of making such an election, they should also have the right of making an agreement with the priest in respect to his salary ; but that ' if the law required the commune to pass a resolution electing the priest and binding the commune to pay for the performance of rites which we do not require, we are in a difficulty as to such election.' ” The same witness stated that the peasantry spend at least one-third of the year in idleness, and that they establish new holidays by resolutions passed at communal meetings, inflicting fines for their non-observance.

Evidence to a similar effect was given from the north of Russia (Novgorod). “Holidays,” said the witness, “are increasing beyond measure ; any circumstance that may have had a beneficial effect in one commune is a holiday for all ; the peasants go to the church, ask the priest to perform mass, take up the church banners, go to a neighbouring village, where they remain roystering and giving way to debauchery, and ending each day

in obliviousness and indecency. Sometimes, in consequence of such holidays, the peasants leave their new-cut hay for a week, allow the most favourable time for stacking it to pass, and the result is that when autumn comes they have no food for their cattle; whereas if they had properly attended to their hay they would have had abundance of fodder. These holidays are the ruin of villages; the peasants throw themselves in masses into a village and eat up everything they find, and the villages thus visited proceed in their turn to a neighbouring commune and also consume everything."

In the province of Moscow, the commune is stated to be "a great despot, and prevents the peasants from working when a popular saint or an image of St. Nicholas, the Miracle Worker, is expected in a village." It is perhaps on this account that the same witness denied any falling off in religious feeling. He stated that there was no change in that respect, but that the number of holidays was great. Another proprietor from the province of Moscow thought the cry raised on the subject of holidays had no foundation, and added "a man must have rest sometimes." This view was not, however, shared by a witness whose experience had reference to five of the most central provinces of Russia—Moscow, Yaroslaf, Kaluga, Orel, and Saratof—and who deposed as follows:—"The number of idle days has sensibly increased. New holidays are now

celebrated in addition to old ones, and as a rule the peasants devote a greater number of days than formerly to the celebration of each festival. Thus, the festival of a village church formerly took the peasants away from their work for a day and only seldom for two days. Now, however, they frequently leave their work for a week at a time."

The South of Russia presents the same spectacle. The report from Poltava was :—"An immense loss is inflicted by the holidays that occur in summer. In addition to holidays of a general character, there are also local festivals. Thus, the peasants celebrate the 6th of July (St. Anthony's Day), because, they say, anybody who works on that day will be afflicted with St. Anthony's fire (gangrene). On the 27th of July they celebrate the festival of Panteleimon, because lightning would singe the corn of any one who worked on that day. The 29th of June is St. Peter's Day, but in our province the 30th of June is also kept as 'Half Peter's Day.' In spring, during the period of sowing, the peasantry keep 'St. Russalka.'* The clergy do nothing towards enlightening the people in this respect. On the contrary, some priests invent holidays, without, however, performing divine service on such days, when the peasants suspend their work and take to the bottle.

* The Slavonian nymph of the woods.

Not unfrequently the priest invites them to come and work for him, on the plea that the holiday is 'not a big one,' and that 'there is no sin in working for a priest.'"

In Podolia the evil is increased by the occurrence of Roman Catholic festivals, which are celebrated by all, in addition to the holidays of the Russo-Greek Church.

Count A. Bobrinski stated that, in the province of Moscow, the days devoted to idleness had increased in number, "more particularly in consequence of the extraordinary resolutions passed at some village meetings. Thus, in the village of Onuphrem, the meeting resolved in July, when field work is indispensable, to suspend all work for ten days, as the peasants were about to bring the image of St. Nicholas of Mojaisk from the Cathedral of Volokokama. Any man who worked during that period was fined."

As compared with Podolia, the piety of the peasants in the province of Saratof (according to a second witness) is incomparably lower, owing to the superior education of the Roman Catholic priesthood. "The peasantry are very indifferent to education. Compulsory measures are necessary."

The evidence given in respect to the progress of instruction was to the following effect:—

Tambof.—The Zemstvo (territorial body) spends much money on schools, but it cannot be said that

morality has improved under their influence. The tendency to drunkenness and theft has not at all decreased, but has rather increased. There is no respect for the rights of property, for cases of theft are becoming more and more frequent. 2. "Of late years the school movement has fallen off. The teachers have become less satisfactory." 3. Unfortunately the morality of the peasantry has decidedly declined. This is principally owing to the sorry condition of the rural clergy, who have no influence over the people. Also, the absence of proper schools has an immense influence on the decline of morality. The teachers (in such schools as exist) are quite unfit for their duties. They are mostly young men who have not finished their studies in ecclesiastical seminaries. A disregard of the rights of property is growing. Theft is developed to an alarming extent. No redress is to be had from the magistrates. 4. As regards the latter statement, another witness from the same province deposed:—"The theft of stacks of corn is more frequent than the theft of timber, because the former crime is more easily perpetrated. Recently, some peasants killed on the spot some horse-stealers whom they had caught, as they had no confidence in the result of a judicial inquiry."

Minsk.—The schools have no influence whatever on the population. The young men who are sent to teach reading and writing are mostly unmarried and of frail

morality. In winter they have a few boys to instruct, but in summer they do nothing but debauch, and thus demoralize the people by deed and by example. The teachers belong principally to the priesthood; they are at a low level of civilization and education, without families; and as their lives would otherwise be dull, they give way to drunkenness and dissipation.

Smolensk.—“The schools are in a melancholy condition. The rural clergy, who are not distinguished for their knowledge of reading and writing, for their culture or their morality, are bad instructors. The peasants therefore engage old soldiers, who teach for the sake of a piece of bread. Horse-stealing is extremely general.”

Simbirsk.—“Many schools, but in a very sorry condition, because the teachers are mostly former domestic serfs or old soldiers, Government writers, &c.”

Kazan.—“Many schools. The parochial schools conducted by the clergy are very bad; those of the Zemstvo are good.”

Grodno.—“The schools are not very well frequented, although numerous (forty). The peasants are averse to sending their children to school, for fear of their wishing to become writers or gentry. Unless under compulsion, children are not sent to school, so that the latter are occupied only by teachers in receipt of salaries.”

St. Petersburg.—“Although the Zemstvo and the Government assist in the establishment of schools, yet the influence of the latter is still very slight. There are no good teachers, only drunken students from ecclesiastical seminaries.”

Chernigof.—“The schools have hitherto not been used by the peasantry, but since the last two or three years there has been a strong desire to acquire knowledge. This is probably owing to the expected reform of the law of military conscription, rumours of which are propagated by old soldiers. Drunkenness, however, has begun to increase.”

Rostof on the Don and Taganrog.—“Schools improving, but still unsatisfactory. The laws are scarcely anywhere observed.”

Vologda.—“The influence of schools is not yet apparent.”

Saratof.—“There is a tendency to send children to school, particularly where the peasants are well off, but the fruits of such education can only be expected at a distant future.”

Riazan and Tula.—That much has still to be done for the instruction of the peasantry in these provinces is apparent from the following observations submitted to the Imperial Commission by Mr. Muromtseff:—
“The basis of all Government measures should be a gradual elevation of the level of popular education; it is only when the people shall have attained a certain

mental majority that the well-intentioned measures of the Government will be understood and accepted. On the other hand, the Government will derive aid and support from the people only when they shall have left their present condition of infancy and grown to a certain ripeness of understanding."

Volhynia.—"The schools are falling off from a want of proper teachers."

Several witnesses advocated the employment of women in schools in order to obviate the evil (viz. the absence of proper teachers) so generally reported. The Minister of the Imperial Appanages recommended, more particularly, the education of females in order that they might impart moral instruction to their children. His Excellency observed :—"Our peasants' schools (of the appanages) are nearly all empty, because the parents do not like to pay fifty copeiks" (1s. 3d.).

Some of the witnesses before the Imperial Commission denied that there was any falling off on the score of morality, or accounted for the immorality, which they reported in the following terms :—"Although it cannot be denied," said a witness from the province of Yaroslaf, "that on Sundays the congregations in churches are smaller than they used to be; that the peasants drink immoderately; that at present the infringement of the rights of property, and various disorders in families and village communities, are more frequent than formerly; yet these painful facts should

not be considered as something novel and unexpected, and still less as symptoms of a decline in the public morality. In my opinion, the level of morality among the peasantry has not fallen at all, if we consider the question 'in substance'; it is only the ignorance and the rude animal instincts of that class that have received greater scope and liberty to assert themselves. In order to be convinced of this, it is only necessary to recollect the position of the nobility during the existence of serfage, and its influence on the whole structure of provincial life, and on the life of the peasant in particular; to remember, also, that the peasantry, when liberated from the ferrule of serfage, stood apart from all other sections of the agricultural class, and apart from all in respect to their separate self-government; and, further, that all participation in that self-government by the more developed classes was set aside. It should not, at the same time, be forgotten that, as a rule, religious feeling and principles of morality are transmitted by the family and are purified and brought home to the understanding by the school. The following questions then arise:—What reserve of morality did the peasantry possess at the time of their emancipation? What religious convictions did or could the peasant family transmit? What example of morality can it present? After answering these questions it seems to me no longer difficult to arrive at the conviction that the present moral basis of

the peasant family constitutes a result that has been inevitable, and that it is only a natural consequence of the past. The evil instincts of the serf were kept down by extraneous influence and by fear. At present, however, the liberated peasant has to keep those instincts down himself, and therefore it is necessary that he should know what he ought to do and what he ought not to do. For this purpose an inward preparation of the mind is requisite, and this is just what is absent, and exactly what he cannot get anywhere. The peasants themselves feel their own helplessness, although they point out its cause incorrectly. They may often be heard to say, 'Our people have become weak now; how could it be otherwise when they stand in no fear?' The grown-up generation has not forgotten the fear under which it acquired habits of self-restraint; and the fear of extraneous influences is still alive. The moral deflections of that generation are not dangerous, but the future of the generation that is springing up presents quite a different aspect. It has but very little data for the acquisition of moral solidity. To leave it under the exclusive guidance of the family, which is itself aghast at the state of disorder into which it has been plunged, appears to me in every respect dangerous. The generation that is growing up absolutely requires a knowledge of Christian and civil duties. Well-directed schools should be established under a system of compulsory education."

A large landed proprietor in the province of Minsk "could not say that any falling off in the morality of the peasantry is observable"; but, he added, "horse-stealing is prevalent." This crime was stated by Prince Kotchoubey to be on the decrease in the provinces of Poltava and Chernigof. He observed, however, that "the proprietors had made it a rule not to complain of small delinquencies." His evidence to the effect that "morality has improved together with the well-being of the population" is at variance with that of other witnesses (see above), and particularly with the testimony of a Mr. Miloradovitch, who stated, in respect to the same province, "no respect for the property of others is apparent. There is a visible falling off in the performance of religious duties."

An apologist for the present state of things in the province of Orel urged, "From whence is the peasant to acquire a respect for the property of others? It is easier to use than not to use the property of others, especially as God knows to what condition the dram-shops have brought the peasantry." Another landed proprietor from the province of Orel deposed that "the people generally are not distinguished for honesty, both as regards the fulfilment of contracts and particularly in respect to an observance of the rights of property. Anything that is not secured soon disappears."

One of the witnesses before the Commission, refer-

ring to the province of Vladimir, considered one of the causes of the decline of morality to be the growth of large manufactories, "where ideas of morality in respect to intercourse between the sexes is destroyed, so that the fullest licentiousness and debauchery prevail." A witness from Tula (a province where manufacturing industry is much developed) spoke of the great prevalence of syphilis. This scourge is, however, not confined to manufacturing centres. It prevails throughout Russia. There are many villages in which no man, woman, or child has escaped its effects, and some years ago it was ascertained that in the province of Poltava alone one hundred thousand persons were suffering from it in one form or another.

Prince Krapotkin, whose experience extended over the provinces of St. Petersburg, Vitebsk, Novgorod, and Riazan, stated that when serfdom existed he endeavoured to make his peasants as rich as possible, in the hope that they would become more diligent. "But," he added, "after the emancipation I found myself deceived in my expectations; the richer the peasants became the ruder and more idle became their habits, and at first it was impossible to do anything with them. Now that they are to a great extent ruined they have begun to work. The increasing habits of drunkenness have caused a falling off in the agricultural produce of the peasant."

Count Orloff Davidoff, one of the largest landed

proprieters in Russia, made the following statement:—
“Drunkenness has spread among the peasantry, cattle-breeding is falling off, the peasants have become poorer, their huts resemble dung-heaps. Frequently there is a gate (to an enclosure), but no fence. Their coffers are empty.”

CHAPTER V.

NIHILISM.

A GOOD many useless speculations have been indulged in as to the origin of Nihilism; and writers on the subject are not even agreed as to whether the name was deliberately adopted by the Nihilists themselves, or given to them as a nickname by an outside observer. In philosophy the term is by no means new. It was first used by the Germans, and was soon afterwards adopted by the French. "Negation of the infinite leads straight to Nihilism," Victor Hugo has somewhere written. Proudhon uses the word "Nihilism" in more than one place; and sometime before Proudhon, Royer-Collard spoke of the "scepticism, or Nihilism, which characterises the philosophy of these latter days."

A mild sort of Nihilism has long been professed in

America, where the Nihilistic creed is summed up in three short phrases: "there is nothing new, and nothing true, and it don't signify." The late Prince Peter Dolgoroukoff, speaking on the subject of Nihilism a dozen years ago at Geneva to the present writer, said that there were two kinds of Nihilists in Russia, "those who had nothing in their heads, and those who had nothing in their pockets."

For a long time, indeed, Nihilism in Russia consisted in mere passive negation. Under the reign of Nicholas everyone was bound to believe in God, the Tzar, the holiness of Holy Russia, and so on; and all revolutionary works, together with all philosophical works of a kind reputed dangerous, were proscribed. The accession, however, of the present Emperor was followed by a general relaxation in all departments of life, especially in connection with the Government; and long before the introduction of the important reforms with which the name of Alexander II. will always be associated, the censorship so severely exercised under Nicholas, became so mild in its action that books were admitted into Russia and translated into Russian, which, under the previous reign, could never have crossed the frontier. Such freedom of the press as, through a mitigated censorship, the Russians were allowed to enjoy was at once used for the most subversive purposes. A natural reaction had set in, and, together with much genuine enthusiasm for reforms of

all kinds, the more active-minded among the Russians began to conduct themselves much in the fashion of schoolboys suddenly relieved from the presence of the master.

It is only of late years that Nihilism has been heard of in England. But it sprang into existence with the new state of things introduced into Russia by Alexander II. In Gogol's *Revizor* one of the characters is made to say of another, that "to hear him speak of the way in which the world was formed is enough to make your hair stand on end." But no one would have been allowed in the days of Nicholas to question directly in print the truth of the Mosaic account of the Creation. The Russians were filled with delight when they found that, without getting themselves into trouble, they could proclaim aloud that the world was not made in six days, that man was descended from the ape, that everything was matter, and that there was no such thing as spirit; with other edifying doctrines of the same character.

Repression under Nicholas had been so severe that when the heavy hand was no longer felt a sort of uprising took place. The publication of such a journal as the late Mr. Herzen's *Kolokol* (the *Bell*) would have been far more justifiable under the reign of Nicholas, when there was no sign of the iniquitous, despotic system being in any way modified, than under that of Alexander II., during which—and dating from His

Majesty's very accession—a whole series of useful reforms have been introduced. But the teeth of educated Russians had been set on edge by the sour grapes that Nicholas had forced them to eat; and instead of softening the hearts of malcontents by granting a certain measure of liberty, while making it evident that more would follow, the new emperor, by the mildness of his rule, encouraged them to adopt an attitude of defiance.

Netchayeff, a student engaged in some conspiracy, who murdered one of his associates at Moscow, and fled the country, and Tchernisheffsky, the principal writer in an extremely liberal review called the *Contemporary*, who, in 1862, was exiled to Siberia, have recently been mentioned as the first Nihilists whose names were brought prominently before the public. But putting aside Russian exiles such as Herzen, Ogareff, and Bakounin—whose writings, if they did not aim formally at the destruction of all existing institutions, at least went very much in that direction—the first public professor of what has since become known as “Nihilism” was a writer named Mikhailoff, who, in 1861, wrote and put into circulation a highly Nihilistic pamphlet, or fly-sheet, called *An Address to the Young Generation*.

Mikhailoff, who had previously gained a certain notoriety by some curious articles on the emancipation of woman, was the first political offender dealt with by the

Russian tribunals since the accession of Alexander II.; and it was a sign of the time that the mere fact of his being arrested and prosecuted for a political offence made Mr. Mikhailoff at once the most popular man in Russia. The shop windows were full of his portraits, no album of *cartes-de-visite* was thought complete without that of Mr. Mikhailoff; and people said that there was even a demand for his articles on the emancipation of woman. Under the reign of Nicholas many a better man than Mr. Mikhailoff had been sent to Siberia without anyone's venturing to notice his disappearance. But the Russians under the relaxed system of the new reign had in half a dozen years learnt no longer to fear the Government; and the enthusiasm shown on behalf of an exile who had not been banished without cause could only be explained by a wish to testify want of sympathy for those who were punishing him.

Mr. Mikhailoff, after being tried by the senate, was sentenced to twelve and a half years' exile to Siberia with hard labour in the mines, being half the ordinary legal punishment for the treasonable offence of which he had been convicted. The Emperor reduced the term of exile to six years, and said nothing about the hard labour which it was understood would not be enforced. In spite of this leniency, so much sympathy was felt for the author of the *Address to the Young Generation* that a subscription was opened in Moscow

and St. Petersburg for his benefit, and a considerable sum collected. To render what was exceedingly strange all but inexplicable one of the largest contributors to the Mikhailoff fund was the Emperor himself. Such, at least, was the report current at the time in both the capitals. Nor was it without basis. The General-Governor of St. Petersburg had put his name down for a thousand roubles; and this he never could have done without the Emperor's permission; so that Alexander II. helped in any case to swell the amount which Mikhailoff, or Mikhailoff's family, was to receive.

To send a man to Siberia and present him with a thousand roubles on the occasion of his starting seems a strange and contradictory sort of proceeding. But the object in making the gift was to deprive of all political significance the reflection implied in getting up the Mikhailoff testimonial. The *Moscow Gazette* suggested at the time that the proper treatment to have pursued towards Mikhailoff would have been to pardon him, or rather not to prosecute him at all. This fact is worth remembering as showing how little importance was attached in 1861 by such a keen political observer as Mr. Katkoff to the revolutionary movement then just beginning.

Mr. Katkoff was, it is true, at that time full of English ideas—so that his fellow journalists called him “Lord Katkoff,” while the caricaturists of the comic papers took pleasure in representing him with a Scotch

cap on his head; and it seemed to him that the Russian Government was strong enough to show towards Mr. Mikhailoff such an attitude as would be held by the English Government towards Fenians who confined their Fenianism to the publication of seditious writings. If, argued Mr. Katkoff, the *Address to the Young Generation*, instead of being seized wherever copies of it could be found, had been freely published in the Russian newspapers, its absurdity, no less than its wickedness, would have been patent to everyone; and Mr. Mikhailoff, far from being admired as a patriot and a hero, would have been despised as a malicious fool.

Mr. Mikhailoff's "Address" commenced with an attack upon the Emperor for not liberating the peasants during the carnival of 1861, when, as he seems to have thought, they would have had an opportunity of giving full expression to their delight. It accused him moreover of not having given them "the kind of freedom which they imagined, and which was necessary for them"—that is to say, freedom to dispossess the proprietors of their land, without offering them any species of compensation; and of having "robbed them of their joy," by postponing their emancipation until Lent. Moreover, the "people's party," which Mr. Mikhailoff described as "the most educated, most honest, and most able portion of Russian society," had not been consulted about the emancipation, but on the

contrary had been "treated with nothing but scorn" by the Emperor.

"None of the people"—said the address—"took part in it; journalism did not dare to squeak; the Emperor threw the people their freedom as one throws a bone to a hungry dog, to quiet him for a moment and to save one's own calves." "All this," continued the writer "cannot and must not be forgiven. The people do not exist for the Government, but the Government for the people. The Romanoffs have evidently forgotten that they were chosen by the people—and did not fall from heaven—because they were thought more fit to govern than any Polish or Swedish kings; and if they do not justify the expectations of the empire, off with them! We do not want a power which offends us, which impedes our intellectual development, the civic and economical development of all the country. We have no need of a power whose motto is dissipation and self-interest. We need no czar, no emperor, no anointed of God, no ermine mantle covering hereditary incapacity, but a simple earthly man, understanding human life and the people by whom he is elected. We need no emperor anointed in the Cathedral of the Assumption, but a chosen elder receiving wages for his work. The emancipation of the serfs, and the events of the last four years, have shown that the new government, as at present composed, and with the rights by which it now profits, is good for

nothing.” “There is not one class”—Mr. Mikhailoff went on to say—“which imperial power does not offend, the last great offence being given when imperial power thought it was laying the foundation of a great Russia.” “We do not deny the importance of the fact expressed in the manifesto of the 19th of February,” he continued, “but we do not see its importance where the Government sees it. The emancipation of the serfs is the first step either to a grand future or to immense misfortunes to Russia. It is for us to choose. The emancipation is important, because it has sown the seeds of general discontent towards the Government. We wish to remind Russia that the time has now come for her to treat the Government as the peasants of a certain estate in Tamboff treated their German stewards. When the manifesto of the emancipation was read to them, they harnessed horses to a cart, told the stewards very politely to get into it, and when they had driven them to the limits of the estate, said to them, also very politely, ‘We are much obliged to you for having governed us, but now go, God be with you, and never come back here!’”

By weakening the power of the proprietors the Government, according to Mr. Mikhailoff, had weakened its own power, and Catherine understood what she was saying when she declared that she was the principal proprietor in the empire. In all Russian history despotism has only benefited the people once, “and that

was when the reigning emperor said, 'Let the serf be free,' and one hundred thousand proprietors bowed their readiness to obey his autocratic will." But this was the last flash of expiring despotism. Discontent was now in every breast, and everyone was expecting something to happen. Alexander II. was asked to understand this, and to "yield to the people" while there was yet time, or it might be worse for him.

The situation, then, which, according to Mr. Mikhailoff, the Government had created for itself by emancipating the serfs, was this: it had alienated the proprietors, hitherto its supporters and its agents, without contenting the peasantry. The writer addresses himself to the young generation because they only were "capable of sacrificing personal interest for the happiness of the country at large." They were to "tell the people that they had well-wishers who desired them to possess land, and not to be always dependent upon proprietors; who sought to diminish their taxes and their tributes of various kinds, who would establish truth on the judgment-seat, and release the people from a superabundance of nurses and guardians." The young generation was also to speak "words of comfort" to the army. The soldiers were to be told that they, too, had their well-wishers, who desired them to have higher pay and shorter service, and to be freed from the stick. In dealing with the people and the soldiers the young generation was to explain that the

impediments which stood in the way of the reforms desired on their behalf by the before-mentioned "well-wishers" were "the Emperor and his ministers, for whom they would not be profitable."

Some persons, Mr. Mikhailoff went on to say, wished "to turn Russia into an England," allusion being here made to the movement going on among the proprietors who, at the assemblies of the nobility held at the end of 1861 and the beginning of 1862, did, in fact, with remarkable unanimity, demand a constitution: also to the high admiration for English institutions constantly proclaimed at this time by the *Moscow Gazette*. As for the revolutionary attempts of 1848, they were failures only as regards Europe, and it by no means followed that a new order of things could not be established in Russia. Are the economical and territorial conditions of Europe," asked Mr. Mikhailoff, "the same as ours? Do, and can, agricultural communes exist there as here? Can every peasant and every citizen there be a landed proprietor? No; but in Russia they can. We have so much land that we have enough for tens of thousands of years. We are a nation behind other nations, and that is where our salvation lies. We must thank our fate that we have not lived the life of Europe. Her misfortunes and difficulties ought to be lessons to us. We do not want her aristocracy or her proletarianism, her formation into kingdoms, or her imperial power. We are like new settlers: we have

nothing to break down. Let us leave our field of people at rest as it is, but we must weed out the rank grass which has sprung up from seed blown to us in the shape of German ideas of economy and government. As Germany has her petty princes and France her Napoleons, while America is governed after quite a different fashion; so Russia can, and must, be organized quite differently from either America or any of the European States. We do not want to divide our land according to foreign taste, or as land was divided before land became scarce, in ancient times. We can act according to our own ideas in this matter, and that is why we are not afraid of the future, and go boldly forward to face revolutions. We even wish for them. We have faith in our young strength. We believe that we are destined to open a new era in history; that we have our own word to say, and are not called upon to follow Europe. . . . If, in order to carry out our instinctive ideas and to divide the land among the people, it should be necessary to kill a hundred thousand proprietors, we should not be afraid to do so. And there is nothing frightful about it. Remember how many men we lost in the Polish and Hungarian wars for the caprice of Nicholas, without any advantage, and to the disgrace of the whole country. And is the nobility better than the working forces of the country? No; until now it has been their enemy."

Mr. Mikhailoff then asks what an aristocracy really is; whether it could get on without the labouring classes, and whether the labouring classes could not get on very well without it, supposing that it and all the Court were suddenly to perish. "What," he inquires, "can a grand duke want with one hundred and thirty horses, when a better and more useful man can drive with a pair? Why should fifty millions a year be spent on the Court, when, for a tenth part of the sum, men could be employed who would understand and work for the good of the country."

Finally, Mr. Mikhailoff recommends the youth of Russia to form revolutionary circles each among his own friends; and here we find the principle of organization as afterwards adopted by the secret revolutionary societies brought to light at the great trial of 1877—the principle, too, which, even as Mr. Mikhailoff wrote, was being adopted by the future insurgents of Poland. Each young man was enjoined to make at least ten converts, until at last, in companies of ten, all the "well-meaning" men of Russia would be leagued together so as to form one vast conspiracy.

Apart from the Law of Emancipation, there were in the years 1861 and 1862 several other causes of agitation in the Russian empire which the liberalism or laxity of the Government allowed to be manifested in various forms until at last measures of suppression were adopted. Important national manifestations had

been made in Poland, and the Russian Government had, in some slight measure, replied to them by forming, at the instance of the Marquis Wielopolski, district and provincial assemblies, and by granting to the kingdom complete administrative autonomy; and as the Polish demonstrations still continued, it was thought by many that the Government would end by restoring the Polish constitution, which would, of course, be made a reason for demanding the introduction of a similar constitution into Russia proper. Additional grounds for anticipating the publication of some sort of constitution for Russia were found in the fact that in the spring of 1861 the Emperor had promised to restore the constitutional government of the Grand Duchy of Finland which had, for fifty years, been suspended. Indeed, at the beginning of 1862 each of the four estates in Finland was called upon to choose deputies, who assembled at Helsingfors towards the end of January. The agitators of various St. Petersburg clubs, the chief contributors to the *Contemporary* (whose editor, Tchernisheffsky, was ultimately sent to Siberia), the readers of Herzen's revolutionary paper published in London under the title of *The Bell*, and introduced by all sorts of ingenious and unexpected means into Russia, desired very much more than had been conceded, or was likely to be conceded, to the Fins and the Poles. But Mr. Herzen's demands were infinitely more moderate than the unpractical and ab-

solutely impracticable ones put forward by the revolutionists of the Mikhailoff type—the Nihilists, in short; and in the early days of the *Kolokol* Mr. Herzen asked for nothing more than the abolition of corporal punishment, securities against arbitrary arrest, open proceedings in law courts, with irremovable judges, and trial by jury, liberty of the press, and the formation of a parliament with power to make laws, control the expenditure, and exercise all the rights usually belonging to such a body.

The students of the universities, as the elect of that youth to which Mr. Mikhailoff and other revolutionists addressed their appeals, had for some time past neglected their appointed work to devote themselves to politics; and this may in a measure explain the fact on which the Government prosecutors have laid stress at recent political trials—that the students who take a leading part in agitations against the State have generally proved themselves unable to pass their examinations. It had been found out to be necessary, after the accession of Alexander II., to remodel the universities; and after the barriers which excluded certain classes, and which limited the number of students at each university to three hundred, had been removed, young men from all parts of Russia and in all positions of life flocked to the great educational centres. The fee had been lowered to an almost nominal charge, a number of scholarships had been

founded, and the students were allowed to form funds among themselves for the benefit of those who were unable to bear the full expense of a university course. Suddenly the universities became the most popular institutions in the country, precisely because under the new organization given to them they were a living protest against the repression exercised upon them and upon every manifestation of intellectual activity under the hated Nicholas. The Emperor Nicholas thought it would be quite sufficient if the universities supplied a sufficient number of educated men for the chief posts in the administration and in diplomacy; and he had no intention whatever of placing the "higher instruction" within reach of the lower classes. Under the new regulations, however, no class was excluded from such advantages as a university education may offer; and the reduced fees, the scholarships, and the students' fund enabled the sons of the very poorest men to benefit by them. The students' fund was largely augmented by subscriptions from the outside public in the shape of receipts derived from theatrical entertainments, concerts, and balls given in its name.

A perfect mania for popular education now set in. Everybody was to do educational work of some sort—to teach or to be taught; and in all the barracks of St. Petersburg and Moscow, and notably at the St. Petersburg Military Academy, Sunday-schools were established, where the officers, no longer devoted to

idleness and pleasure, instructed their soldiers in writing, reading, and arithmetic. They also communicated to them the elements of such political philosophy as had lately come into vogue; so that, after a time, the Sunday-schools were closed as nests of revolutionary propagandism.

About the same time, or a little earlier, the new organization of the universities was in a great measure done away with; for these also had become revolutionary centres. Apart from the newly born passion for politics by which all the educated classes were now affected, and to which young men gave themselves up with a sort of fanaticism, the students had accustomed themselves to meet in assembly for the purpose of regulating and administering their benevolent fund; and after a series of quasi-parliamentary discussions on the subject of the restrictive rules newly introduced, the students at the various universities passed resolutions, and drew up an address to the Minister of Public Instruction, in which the new regulations, together with certain newly appointed authorities were severely condemned. Meetings and processions of the same character as those of which we have read during the last year or two took place at St. Petersburg and Moscow, and after the demonstrations had been put down by the troops, and after numerous arrests had been made, the universities were closed. Then the professors opened public classes; and one or two of them who gave to

their lectures a highly coloured political tone were arrested and sent to Siberia.

In the winter of 1861 the triennial assemblies of the nobility were held in various parts of Russia; and early in 1862 addresses from the nobles of St. Petersburg, Moscow, Toula, Tver, Smolensk, and other cities, demanding a constitution were forwarded to St. Petersburg for submission to the Emperor, but were in every case left without acknowledgment.

Grave signs, moreover, of discontent showed themselves among the peasantry, and these in the neighbourhood of Kazan took a thoroughly national, traditional form. A new Stenko-razin, a new Pugatcheff, appeared in the person of a peasant named Anton Petroff, who declared himself to be Alexander II.; flying from St. Petersburg in order to escape the enraged nobles who could not forgive his having made over the whole of the land to the newly emancipated serfs. The impostor collected ten thousand men round him; and when all fair means of persuading them to disperse had been resorted to in vain, it was found necessary to employ military force. Petroff having been taken prisoner and shot, "order" was speedily restored.

Meanwhile the echoes from the revolutionary *Bell* penetrated everywhere. The paper was lent from hand to hand, passages from it were copied in manuscript and similarly put into circulation; while in St. Petersburg itself a sheet called *Land and Liberty* (*Zimla e Vola*)

—the precursor of the *Land and Liberty* of the present day—was started by some mysterious means of which the secret was never discovered. Proclamations, too, in different forms but of the same revolutionary character, were found stuck up every morning on the walls of the capital; and seditious papers were thrown one night in the Imperial Chapel at the foot of the Emperor himself.

There were many signs of an approaching revolutionary outbreak; and in May 1862 an attempt at revolution was actually made, though, owing to the attention at that time claimed by the affairs of Poland, it attracted but little notice in Western Europe. On the 22nd of May a fire broke out in the wooden buildings of one of the public markets, and before it could be extinguished other fires were seen in various parts of the city. The work of the incendiaries lasted a week, during which time a mass of shops known as the Tchukin “Dvor,” or Court, the residence of the Minister of the Interior, and many private and public buildings in various parts of the city, were burnt to the ground. The conflagrations took place in the daytime during Whitsuntide, while the streets and public places were thronged with holiday-makers; and in the midst of the confusion caused by these evident acts of incendiarism a certain number of men were arrested in the act of distributing revolutionary proclamations. During the progress of the fires the printing-office of a revolu-

tionary journal called *Great Russia* (*Veliko Rus*) was discovered, and a student was taken as he was delivering an article intended for publication on the following day. The article was understood to be the work of some other hand, and it was apparently in connection with the publication of this secret revolutionary journal, and not with that of the magazine called the *Contemporary*, that Tchernisheffsky, the editor of that magazine, was seized, brought to trial, and exiled to Siberia. A great number of arrests were made among officers, chiefly subalterns and students. But nothing was positively discovered, or at least nothing was made public as to the origin of the fires ; and ashamed of their work—if their work it really was—the revolutionists themselves, both in St. Petersburg and London, repudiated all connection with them.

Energetic measures were now adopted for suppressing the agitation which had taken so serious a form ; and much of the agitation disappeared of itself by reaction and as a natural result of the excesses to which it had led. But what above all things put an end to the revolutionary movement of 1861 and 1862 was the outbreak of the Polish insurrection early in 1863. In presence of the Polish claim to independence and to what the Russians called the “reconquest” of those portions of ancient Poland which had been annexed by Russia at the three partitions of the eighteenth century, all parties in Russia united. All thoughts of

LAND AND LIBERTY, all thoughts of constitutional government, disappeared when the Russians awoke to the fact that Poland was menacing the unity of the empire and that she was being supported in her attempt by the diplomacy of all Europe.

While the Polish insurrection was going on there was no question in Russia of opposing the Government; the Nihilists either pretended to be dead, or—what really in numerous instances took place—passed into the camp of the national democratic party which hated Poland for the aristocratic tendencies of its people and for its catholicism, quite as much as because it was in a political sense the enemy of Russia.

In the work of disorganization by which the suppression of the Polish insurrection was followed, there were abundant opportunities for carrying into practice some at least of the Nihilistic doctrines. Proprietors had to be dispossessed; power had to be vested in newly formed peasant communes to the injury of the local nobility, while the catholic element had to be weakened in various ways both in the kingdom of Poland and, above all, in Lithuania.

The Polish insurrection seemed really to have had the effect of uniting all classes in Russia; and during the years 1864 and 1865 nothing was heard about Nihilism. That Nihilism, however, had not died out was shown in a sufficiently striking manner when on the 4th of April 1866 Vladimir Karakosoff, a former

student of the Moscow University, fired at the Emperor in the summer garden at St. Petersburg. Karakosoff as was proved at his trial, belonged to a revolutionary association having its headquarters at Moscow and at St. Petersburg; an association which aimed at the annihilation of the State, the Church, property, marriage, and every institution on which society and Government have hitherto rested. The Tzar, as symbolising everything the Nihilists proposed to destroy, was first of all to be sacrificed.

The Government affected to regard Karakosoff's attempt as the work of a single fanatical individual. But the true character of the act was at once perceived; and immediately after the execution of the would-be regicide an Imperial Rescript was issued in which it was set forth that law, property, and religion were threatened by dangerous socialistic intrigues, that the liberal intentions of the Government had been misunderstood, and that the conservative elements of the State must and should be preserved inviolate. Several democratic journals were suppressed; and to show that the Government intended to make itself in all matters implicitly obeyed, the conservative and patriotic *Moscow Gazette* was, in consequence of its having set at nought certain instructions from the Minister of the Interior, suspended for two months. It was during the alarm caused by Karakosoff's attempt that Count Schouvaloff was appointed chief of the secret political police. This

appointment was accompanied by the dismissal of the Minister of Instruction, Golovnin, who by his too great liberalism was held to have aided the dissemination of Nihilistic doctrines. Golovnin was replaced by a friend of Count Schouvaloff's, Count Tolstoi—a strong conservative.

The disclosures made at Karakosoff's trial, and the measures of repression by which they were followed, attracted but little attention in Western Europe, exclusively occupied at the time with the conflict between Prussia and Austria. For some years after Karakosoff's attempt nothing was heard, at least not publicly, of the Nihilists. But secret action was constantly being taken against them, and not long after the Franco-German war a circular, which the present writer has seen, was addressed to the marshals of nobility throughout Russia, pointing out that disaffection was spreading everywhere, that there was scarcely a family which did not number among its members some ill-disposed person more or less bound up with secret societies, and urging the marshals to use influence with the landed proprietors of their provinces and districts so as to bring them to counteract by all possible means the dangers by which the country was threatened.

In 1873 the police discovered at Saratoff a band of conspirators, who, under pretence of keeping a boot-maker's shop, were carrying out revolutionary designs of the most audacious kind—designs of which a detailed

account will be found in the next chapter. The documents seized at the revolutionary boot-shop proved that Ivan Pelkonen, the proprietor of the place, belonged, with his associates in the business, to a secret society which, as the act of accusation read at the trial declared, "had branches in all parts of the empire," and which was, moreover, in constant communication with the Russian exiles established at Zurich.

Since the great trial of 1877 Nihilism has spread more and more, and we have seen many of the acts of 1862 and of 1866 repeated on an extended scale. As in 1862, incendiarism has been resorted to as a means of causing discontent. As in 1866, an attempt has been made on the Emperor's life; innumerable attacks, for the most part fatal, have been made upon high officials; and an organization has been adopted which closely resembles that of the Polish National Government in 1861, 1862, and 1863. In revolution, as in war, it may be permitted to be "taught by the enemy"; and though we have hitherto heard of no Poles taking part in the projects of the Russian revolutionists, it is tolerably certain that these latter have borrowed both their organization and their means of action from Poland. When the Polish insurrection of 1863 was being prepared, as when it was being carried on, the Governors of Poland were shot at as fast as they arrived, the leading officials were assailed with pistol or dagger, the conspiracy against the Government was

aided by numbers of Government functionaries, and that very General Trepoff who fourteen years afterwards received a bullet from the revolver of a Russian female revolutionist, was attacked and dangerously wounded in one of the principal squares of Warsaw by a party of insurgents disguised as peasants and armed with hatchets as if for wood-cutting purposes.

Nihilism, as an organized force, is not even at present very dangerous. But the numbers of the nihilists are constantly increasing ; and they have been doing so, not steadily, but by fits and starts, throughout the present reign and, notably, from 1861, the year of Mikhailoff's exile, until now. They certainly have no power to overturn the Government. But they might at a critical moment, through adherents in the army and in the civil administration, go far towards paralyzing its action. They are resorting, moreover, to every device by which to bring about that most formidable danger of all—an insurrection of peasants ; not against the Tzar but against the officials and the proprietors who, they purposely assert, persist in not carrying out the Tzar's liberal intentions, in the matter of land, towards the liberated serfs.

CHAPTER VI.

A NIHILIST CONSPIRACY.

IN the important trial of Nihilists which took place two years ago—towards the end of 1877—at St. Petersburg, the defendants, to the number of nearly two hundred, were accused of having taken part in a “criminal propaganda against the State.” They were for the most part students, and they had all been in prison from three to three and a half years, while evidence was being collected against them. It appears, then, that, however excellent the judicial reforms introduced into Russia a dozen years ago may be, it is still possible to keep accused persons an indefinite time in prison without bringing them to trial. It appears, too, that the law which requires that all legal proceedings shall take place in public need not be observed; for the trial of the “criminal propagandists” was conducted in

private. The special tribunal before which the case was heard declared, nevertheless, that the principle of publicity must be respected, and that as a matter of fact the trial was a public one. But nature has its laws as well as the Russian empire ; and it so happened that the half-dozen judges, the couple of hundred prisoners, the forty counsel engaged in the case, with a certain number of secretaries, shorthand writers, and ushers filled the court so completely that there was no room in it for one single person from the outside. One of the counsel for the accused asked at the outset that the case might be heard in some large hall to which the public could be admitted. But Senator Peters, president of the tribunal (which consisted of two senators, a representative of the nobility, a representative of the merchants, and a representative of the peasantry), replied that it could not be held elsewhere than in a law court, and that all the law courts were of about the same size.

Several of the accused now called out that they were being illegally treated, and that they would be tried in public or not at all. They added that they would not appear at the next day's hearing unless dragged into the court by force. These words were approved by the rest of the prisoners. The president then rose and gave notice that if the tumult did not cease he would have the court cleared. He also informed the accused that the law empowered him to order the removal of any one who interfered with the proceedings, and asked them

whether they thought it to their advantage that they should be absent while serious charges were being made against them. One of the prisoners then demanded that a certain Jew, included among the witnesses and calling himself a Christian, should be prevented from swearing on the New Testament, and taken into a synagogue to be sworn in the Jewish manner. One of the counsel for the accused asked that the evidence of Government agents, who had collected information with a view to their own advancement, might not be received. Both the applications were rejected.

It had been announced at the beginning of the trial that a full report of the proceedings would be published in the *Official Messenger*; and this journal began by printing at length the whole of the elaborate act of accusation, preceded by an introduction which gives in a comparatively short space a general view of the work said to have been done by the "criminal propagandists." The actual existence of the propaganda in question was discovered quite accidentally, though it had long been known that some revolutionary association was at work throughout Russia. On the 27th of May 1873, one Ivan Pelkonen, a native of Finland, opened at Saratoff a boot-shop, which was frequented by such strange people that the police thought it necessary to visit and search the place, when documents were found which proved beyond a doubt that Pelkonen and his friends were members of a secret society having branches in all parts

of the empire. The matter seemed so important that General Slezkin, commanding the gendarmerie in the province of Moscow, was charged with the duty of investigating it, a task which he carried out under the direction of the public prosecutor attached to the High Court of Saratoff.

The evidence collected shows (says the act of accusation) that the society discovered at Saratoff had been originated at St. Petersburg some years before, and that it was the offspring of two earlier societies of the same kind—those of Dolgouschin, Nathanson, and others. The members of these revolutionary associations had for the most part been brought to justice. But some had escaped arrest, while others on being tried had been acquitted. The revolutionists thus left at liberty continued in 1872 their habitual practices, “endeavouring to gain the confidence of workmen, especially those engaged in factories, and seeking, under pretext of teaching them to read and write, to make them discontented with the existing order of things.” This latter object they proposed to attain through their own spoken words and by putting into circulation the seditious writings of the Russian emigrants. Until 1873 these propagandists acted individually; but at the beginning of that year one Tchaikovsky, a student at the University of St. Petersburg and formerly a member of the Society of Nathanson, formed an association which was called “The Circle of the Tchaikovtsi,” or followers of Tchai-

kovsky. In this association most of the St. Petersburg propagandists grouped themselves together. Many of the members were already personally acquainted with the Russian emigrants domiciled at Zurich, and the object of the association was to carry out the ideas of these determined revolutionists. Constant relations were kept up between Zurich and St. Petersburg; and the Russian young women studying at the Zurich University were found very useful as messengers. The Russian emigrants are said to have done their utmost to pervert these "female students," as they are called in the act of accusation; and they seem all, on their return to St. Petersburg, to have entered the ranks of the propagandists. Up to the year 1872 the Russian emigrants only co-operated with the International Society of Working Men. But at the meeting of the International held at the Hague in 1873 it was found that in the midst of the International the Russians had formed a secret society of their own. They were consequently expelled, and thereupon drew up a new formula of social regeneration in these terms:—"Federalism, based on collectivism and mutualism."

Bakounin, who had expounded the idea of federalism in the Swiss section of the International, now formed the "Slavonian section of Zurich," a branch of the "Federation of the Zura" which had refused to acknowledge the authority of the International and had adopted federalism as its motto. According to the formal pro-

gramme of federalism, the object of the Socialist revolutionary party should be "the destruction of all States," the subversion of all Governments and of all civilization of the present type, and the creation of a new social edifice by means of a free federation, from below to above, of independent and productive communes."

Colonel Lavroff, who founded about the middle of 1873 a newspaper called *Vpered* ("Forward"), shared Bakounin's views in a general way. But Bakounin held that agitators ought at once to go among the Russian people and provoke an insurrection; whereas Lavroff thought that revolution ought not to be "imposed" on the people, but that the people ought to be educated to a knowledge of its wants, and thus be prepared for a rising, which, he agreed with Bakounin, must sooner or later take place. Lavroff's opinions were thought ridiculously moderate, and nearly all the emigrants took part with Bakounin against him. That there might be no mistake as to what was really wanted, an emigrant named Tkatcheff brought out a pamphlet entitled "The Task of the Revolutionary Propaganda in Russia," in which it was set forth that the great object must be "not to develop revolutionary feeling in the future, but to realize the revolution in the immediate present." It was explained, moreover, that "too much importance ought not to be attached to questions relating to the organization of the best pos-

sible state of things after the revolution should have accomplished its destructive work"; and that the one aim of the party of action was to engage in a mortal struggle with the Government and with the existing order of things.

The doctrines of Bakounin and Tkatcheff are said to have "found a sympathetic echo in the revolutionary circles of St. Petersburg"; and the arguments of Tkatcheff were taken up and repeated with emphasis in a pamphlet by Prince Krapotkin, a member of the St. Petersburg Society of the followers of Tchaikovsky, entitled, "Ought we to occupy Ourselves with the Ideal of the Social Edifice of the Future?" This futile question was answered by the Prince in the negative. The St. Petersburg societies were guided by the Russian emigrants of Zurich in regard to their organization as well as their doctrines. True to the most advanced principles of democratic equality, they were to have no hierarchy, no superiors or inferiors. None of the members were to be entitled to command, none bound to obey. Each one was to act as seemed best to himself; but, in virtue of the principle of fraternity, they were to help one another and to work together for the attainment of the general aim. Several "circles," as they were called, came into existence during the year 1873. They were recruited from various sources, but chiefly from among the students of the Technological Institute and of the Academy of Medicine and Surgery.

The female members came from the classes for women at the Academy of Medicine and from the School of Midwifery. Two different sets of functions were assigned to the members. One class was to occupy itself with propagandism among the workmen of the factories, while the other prepared an armed rising.

The town revolutionists have hitherto found it impossible to act directly upon the peasantry ; and they experience great difficulty in dealing with the workmen in factories, who are for the most part peasants, absent, for a longer or shorter period, from their villages. They have come to the conclusion that factory workmen and artizans will only listen to men of their own class ; and for this reason they not only adopt the dress of labouring men, but learn trades, open shops, and “ live,” according to their own expression, “ the life of the people.” Thus, members of various revolutionary circles opened forges at St. Petersburg and Odessa, carpenters’ workshops at Moscow, locksmiths’ workshops at Tula, and so on. The St. Petersburg circles were in union with one another, the connection being kept up by means of personal visits and by general assemblies which were held at the house of one Golovin, a student of the Technological Institute, and at the quarters of the 12th company of the Ismail Regiment. Towards the end of 1873 several of the propagandists discovered that the police were on their track, and fled from St. Petersburg to Moscow, where, living

under false names, they formed new "circles" on the model of those already existing at St. Petersburg. Thus the immediate effect of dispersing a few circles was to extend the circular organization. The Moscow propagandists maintained relations with the propagandists of St. Petersburg; and it soon occurred to the latter that new circles might be established at Kieff and elsewhere. A St. Petersburg revolutionist was sent to found a "circle" at Kieff; and from Kieff there issued new circles to be formed at Kharkoff and at Odessa. At Odessa it was easy enough to start a circle on the most approved model; for there were revolutionists in that city who had been to Zurich, and who drew their revolutionary principles, as the act of accusation puts it, "direct from the fountain-head."

But the circles from which, according to the Zurich revolutionists, most was to be hoped had yet to be established. Bakounin was a thorough revolutionist, who had both studied and practised his favourite art. He was at the head of the Prague revolution of 1848; he effected his escape from Siberia, after twelve years' captivity, in 1861; he started from England in a steamer, with arms and with a party of Russian and Polish volunteers, for Polangen, on the coast of Lithuania, in 1863—when, owing to the refusal of the English captain to make for that little-known port, he was unable to give the insurgent Poles the aid he had intended for them. After the revolutionary collapse of 1863 Bakounin lived in

Switzerland, first at Geneva and afterwards at Zurich ; and here he not only pursued his revolutionary studies, but, always a man of action, made converts among the Russian visitors and sent them back to their native land to preach the gospel of revolution. The idea of propagating revolution by such means as the Jesuits are known to have employed for propagating the Catholic faith originated with Bakounin. The act of accusation in the affair of the "criminal propaganda" bears witness to the fact that already revolutionists are to be found in Russia among doctors, lawyers, and artizans—who have become artizans purely for revolutionary purposes ; and, it might have added, among officers and priests. For revolutionists abound in the seminaries and in the military schools, as in the Schools of Medicine, the Technological Institute, and the universities.

If the same causes which produce revolution in other professions did not produce them in the Church and in the army, revolutionists would, under the Bakounin system, enter the Church and the army for the mere purpose of spreading revolutionary ideas. But the organizers at Zurich of the revolutionary circles at St. Petersburg knew that, though St. Petersburg might be the best place for making converts to revolutionary opinions, it was in the east of Russia, "the classic land," as the act of accusation puts it, "of the insurrections of Stenko-Razin and Pugatcheff," that there was most chance of moving the peasantry ; and the remainder

of the indictment, or rather of the introduction to the indictment, shows how revolutionary circles were gradually formed in the Volga districts until at last they were all, or nearly all, broken up through the discovery of the Saratoff circle, installed in the shop of a revolutionist playing the part of a bootmaker.

The act of accusation in this affair set forth that though St. Petersburg was looked upon as the place for spreading the propagandist doctrines, and though from St. Petersburg emissaries went out to preach the glad tidings of revolution in various parts of the empire—where new revolutionary and propagandist societies were duly established—yet that the chosen field of action was in the east, among the peasantry of the districts watered by the lower Volga. In this “classic land of disturbances and revolts,” Pougatcheff, the Cossack, just one hundred years ago, and Stenko-Razin, the Cossack, just two hundred years ago, raised up insurrections which shook the Russian empire to its base. It was from the Volga districts, too, with head-quarters at Nijni Novgorod, that Prince Pojarski and Minin the cattle-dealer marched at the head of the national army which in 1612 drove the Poles from Moscow.

The remarkable thing, however, about the Stenko-Razin insurrection and the Pougatcheff insurrection is that these two popular movements were precisely of the same type. They were partly national, partly religious, chiefly agrarian, and altogether destructive. Especially

noticeable in connection with these movements is the fact that, like the previous insurrections in the name of the young Demetrius, each of them had one or more impostors at its head. Stenko-Razin took with him as essential members of his staff live imitations of the Tzarewitch (son of Tzar Alexis Mikhailovitch) and of the Patriarch Nikon, who had been disgraced and was popularly held to have been ill-treated. Pougatcheff represented himself to be Peter III., the murdered husband of Catherine II., and he is known to have borne a striking resemblance to that monarch. Revolution is often said to be impossible in Russia; partly by reason of the loyalty of Russians in general, partly because even in case of a party being formed against the Government the emperor would always be able to crush it by making an appeal to his faithful peasantry. To this it may be replied that, as a matter of fact, for the last three centuries every Russian sovereign without exception has been deposed or murdered or rebelled against—called upon, that is to say, to deal with revolution in some more or less aggravated form. Alexander I., it is true, was only conspired against; but the military insurrection which broke out on the accession of Nicholas had been planned during Alexander's reign. As for appeals to the people, a genuine appeal on behalf of the sovereign against some rebellious section of his subjects (calling out, say, for a Constitution) would no doubt be successful. But it has happened so often in

the history of Russia that an appeal has been made on behalf of a false tzar; and if in these cases the impostor gives to the peasantry the estates of the landholders he is followed only too readily. The revolutionists of Zurich know well enough that no insurrection of townspeople could be got up in Russia; though the workers in factories, being for the most part peasants and members of peasant communes, may, they think, be made use of for gaining over the peasantry. They have no desire for any insurrection except an insurrection of peasants; and the act of accusation certainly does them no injustice in saying that they aim at bringing about such a rising in the Volga districts, "the classic land of disturbances and revolts."

It is not, perhaps, very generally known in England that soon after the emancipation of the serfs an impostor of the traditional type did actually appear in the province or "government" of Kazan, calling himself Alexander II. and announcing to the peasantry that the lands they had been in the habit of cultivating were theirs unconditionally. Like his predecessors in similar personations, the sham emperor declared that he had just escaped from the power of his jealous nobles, who wished to deprive the poor peasant of his due; and he collected some thousands of peasants around him, so that at last the Government had no course open to it but to send troops against the impostor and shoot him. Unfortunately, a good many peasants were shot at the

same time ; and this circumstance was laid hold of by the Russian revolutionists of London to make it the basis of an attack on the Government—as if the impostor and his followers had been in no way to blame. Whether the impostor, Petroff by name, was an agent of the revolutionary party or a mere fanatic has never been made known. What the revolutionary paper called the *Kolokol* (Bell) chiefly condemned in the affair was the unnecessary severity (as it alleged) with which the insurrection had been put down. But it apparently would have been well pleased had it not been put down at all ; and the revolutionary party of the present day are accused of attempting to get up an insurrection of the same character as that which Petroff headed. A true revolutionist would no doubt prefer a peasant insurrection in the name of pure democracy to a peasant insurrection under the banner of a false czar. But the former is a thing never yet heard of in Russia ; whereas the latter has occurred again and again, and, under the difficult circumstances of the peasants' actual position, might well occur once more.

In connection with the revolutionary circles of eastern Russia—the Volga districts—a leading part, says the act of accusation, was played by an inhabitant of Penza, one Porphyre Voinoralsky. Like the Russian revolutionist Herzen, like the Polish revolutionist Mięrosławski, and like the hero of M. Tourguéneff's revolutionary novel (in which many of the incidents of the

propagandist conspiracy have been strangely anticipated), Porphyre Voinoralsky is of illegitimate birth, but of noble extraction. Porphyre Voinoralsky is the natural son of a proprietor named Larionoff and the Princess Kougousheff. "Disposing of comparatively large pecuniary resources, endowed with great energy and an enterprising disposition, Voinoralsky," we are told, "soon placed himself at the head of the movement." He started at Moscow a printing-office, where were prepared a number of revolutionary pamphlets, which were sent to various places (among others to Pelkonen's boot-shop at Saratoff) for distribution among the people. He also distributed money, formed new circles, and occupied himself personally with propagandism among the people.

The revolutionary propagandism now took two principal directions—that of the south-west, with the circles of Kharkoff, Kieff, Odessa, and Taganrog; and that of the east, with the circles of Moscow, Nijni-Novgorod, Penza, Samara, Saratoff, &c. It would be interesting to know whether the numerous circles belonged to one general conspiracy, or whether each was of spontaneous growth in its own particular town or district. The symptoms would scarcely be less alarming in one case than in the other. The act of accusation says that, "though divided into two tolerably distinct groups, these circles were bound together by conformity of origin, of doctrine, and of object, and by personal re-

lations between the members, and that they formed "one entire body, one criminal association, as is proved by the fact that the search made at Pelkonen's boot-shop enabled the authorities to discover the entire association."

The method of propagandism outside the circles was the same in every case. Under cover of different professions or trades—as of doctor, nurse, teacher, artizan, &c.—the work of propagandism was pursued by word of mouth or by the distribution of books and papers. With regard to the substance of the propaganda, it varied with circumstances, "and according," says the act, "as it was addressed to the lower orders or to those whom the revolutionists styled 'the intelligent classes,' meaning teachers, university students, students of the ecclesiastical colleges, and pupils of the Government gymnasiums." In the former case the agitator pointed out the insufficiency of the allotments of land made to the peasantry, and the oppressive nature of the taxes and other charges weighing upon them; and he insinuated that, "if all the peasants and workmen joined together to upset the Government and massacre the upper classes, they would have no more taxes to pay, and would possess land in abundance, for it would all come to the peasantry." In the second case the agitator laid stress on the desperate position of the peasantry, described its "economical condition" on the authority of revolutionary works, and maintained that

it was the duty of every one to help it to escape from its present situation by the only possible issue—that of revolution and the replacement of the existing Government by a “free federation of productive communes.”

In addressing the “intelligent classes” the propagandists were in the habit of arguing that science was but a means for deriving greater profit from the labour of the people, that the happiness of the people could be secured without the aid of science, and that the best thing for “intelligent people” to do was to quit their studies and go among the people. They added that the various circles would supply with funds those who were prepared to aid them in their work. This doctrine, says the act of accusation, is based on the theory of Bakounin, “who makes an ideal of idleness and ignorance.” Bakounin, it is scarcely necessary to say, does nothing of the kind. His ideal, like that of other Communists, is a state of society without idleness and without destitution. In his “federation of productive communes” there would be no non-producing members. As there would be no State, there would be no State expenditure; and as in the end there would be no nations, there would be no international wars. Bakounin no more makes an ideal of ignorance than he does of idleness. His communes could maintain schools, and federations of communes could support universities. But he would have no class living at leisure, and he would, if necessary for the attainment of

his ends, sacrifice all civilization of the existing type. There is much that is absurd in his system, and much that is criminal in the means by which he proposes to realize it; but neither he, nor probably anyone else, has ever sought to found a society on the basis of "idleness and ignorance."

The financial part of the revolutionary scheme was as strange as all the rest. Members of circles subscribed according to their means, which do not seem to have been large. Voinoralsky, however, and a few others gave considerable sums, and money was obtained from concerts and balls announced as being given "for charitable purposes." This means of procuring supplies would have occurred naturally enough to some of the students, since at St. Petersburg and Moscow concerts and balls are often given for the benefit of students' funds, for founding exhibitions, and so on. The travelling expenses of the propagandists are said to have been considerable, and the outlay in producing and distributing revolutionary books and pamphlets was very great. The balance in hand belonging to the united circles of St. Petersburg did not, when a seizure was effected, amount to more than seven hundredroubles (about £70); but this, of course, gives no idea as to what the income may have been. The act of accusation states, too, that after numerous circles had been for some time actively engaged in propagandism throughout Russia, they had only succeeded in gaining from twenty to thirty adhe-

rents among the common people. If this be true (as it may not be), it proves that it is much easier to find preachers than practisers of revolution in Russia. But the existence of a large mass of revolutionary feeling, taking in many places the form of active revolutionary propagandism, is in itself a dangerous sign. So is the ease with which the societies of propagandists seem everywhere to have been established ; so also is the fact that revolutionary opinions are acquired and revolutionists found in all the public educational establishments of the empire. With or without the support of the peasantry, it cannot be a good thing for the Russian State to have a revolutionary ferment constantly introduced from these schools into the professorate, the priesthood, the Civil Service, and the army.

CHAPTER VII.

AN UNPOLITICAL SECRET SOCIETY.

It is now eighteen long years since a joint-stock society was formed in Russia with the direct object—not usually avowed in such cases, even by the promoters among themselves—of plundering people in general. An element of romance, borrowed from an inferior French novel, was introduced into the organization, which was simply a conspiracy to obtain money under false pretences, but which seemed to lose something of its common-place character through being called, after an ingenious but foolish story by M. Ponson du Terrail, “The Club of the Knaves of Hearts.” There was less heart than knavery in the affair. The associates performed no courageous actions, nor did they show much originality in the conception of their plans, which

seldom rose above the level of ordinary swindles. But there were forty-eight of them, and thirty-six of the number are said to have belonged to "the superior classes of society." They amused themselves, too, and gave an air of comedy to their proceedings by adopting among themselves the names of the various personages who figure in M. du Terrail's novel. They succeeded, by various strokes of humour combined with fraud, in stealing no less than two hundred and eighty thousand roubles. But it took them nine years to realize this sum, which had to be divided among forty-eight confederates. Heine once wrote a little tragedy in which thieves are introduced who, living together in private, rob one another; and probably the distribution of spoil among the Russian "Knives of Hearts" was not regulated on the most equitable principles. Indeed, if some few did not get more than their fair share of the plunder it could scarcely have suited any of them to carry on the game. The principal conspirators, or swindlers-in-chief, Protopopoff, Dmitrieff-Mamonoff, Davidoffsky, Dolgoroukoff, and the Brothers Kaloustoff are described as having had a marked taste for "luxury and idleness." They began, according to the report, by endeavouring to procure money by "all sorts of illicit means," and ended by forming an association with that object. This association was not "a regular organization with written statutes." It was based rather on "a tacit convention between men who,

equally anxious to enrich themselves at the cost of society, saw the necessity of acting in concert." A good deal of money was made by the simple expedient of forging acceptances to bills of exchange. It is said that some money-lenders prefer forged acceptances to all others ; for with genuine signatures they can appeal only to a civil court, whereas with forged signatures they can threaten criminal process. Owing to incidents of one kind and another, several members of the "Knives of Hearts Club" found their way to prison. But Russian prisons are kept in a very loose manner ; and the incarcerated ones continued to draw and to accept bills from the Moscow gaol.

One means of raising money, which is described by the Russian papers as ingenious, and which, tried for the first time, would probably succeed anywhere, consisted in imitating the operations of the gang of swindlers known in London under the collective appellation of the "Long firm." One member of the "Knives of Hearts Club" represented himself as a rich nobleman—a part he was well able to play except in regard to the money side of the character. But appearances are everything ; and the self-styled "Prince," by surrounding himself with satellites, secretaries, and attachés of various kinds—all members of the club—had no trouble in deluding a number of Moscow tradesmen into the belief that he was what he represented himself to be. Dolgoroukoff, by reason of his historic name,

seems to have been called upon to play a leading part in connection with all the most important intrigues. He claimed to belong to the richer branches of the widely ramified house, and freely spoke of Prince Dolgoroukoff, General-Governor of Moscow, as "my uncle." Two of his more plebeian associates bore the strangely appropriate names of "Bilkin" and "Popoff."

It was Dolgoroukoff, sometimes (in the absence of his uncle) called "Prince," who started the Russian Agency, which is not to be confounded with the "Agence Russe" of telegraphic fame. The Russian Agency, established by Dolgoroukoff at Moscow, was an office which enabled clerks, stewards, messengers, and others to obtain, on payment of a fee and on the deposit either of money or of some valuable security, lucrative employment in the service of some member of the "Knives of Hearts Club." The Russian Agency undertook to make all needful inquiries as to the characters of applicants—about which it was very particular—and, on receiving adequate pecuniary guarantees, never failed to find occupation for its clients. This occupation involved no laborious duties; and it was not unusual for the newly engaged ones to have a long holiday given them as soon as the contract had been signed. Doganovsky, who was fond of horses, opened an establishment which he described as the office of his stud and breeding farm. Wishing to increase his stock he made some valuable purchases from Moscow horse-

dealers, for which he paid in bills at short date drawn on the Russian Agency and accepted by the director of the establishment with all due readiness and formality. Some of the chiefs who were not ostensibly in business had estates, of which the produce, as represented by letters and other documents, was entrusted to the Russian Agency for sale. These persons were in the habit of buying jewellery ; and when their stewards had failed to send them money from the country they referred to the Russian Agency, where they received the very best possible characters. The clerks at the Russian Agency had large bundles of forged bank-notes, which they were in the habit of displaying, as if by accident, in the face of intended victims. If a creditor called for money, the forged bank-notes were at once produced, and the man was told to "send in his account in the ordinary way, with the interest added on." This magnanimous attitude in the presence of duns answered for some considerable time. Dolgoroukoff had evidently noticed that the only people seriously pressed for money are those who are believed to have none.

Dmitrieff-Mamonoff, after living for some time in prosperity, was at last reduced to such straits that he had to enter into partnership with an inn-keeper. Those who have visited Moscow, and who have stayed at the Hôtel de Russie, will be interested to hear that Smirnoff, the proprietor of that establishment, was allowed to become a Knave of Hearts. He co-operated specially with

Dmitrieff-Mamonoff, who had the best rooms in the hotel turned into a suite of offices, where, aided by the reputation for inexhaustible wealth made for him by the hotel-keeper, he plundered every one who came near him. Pegoff, who was the son of a merchant, disgraced the society by giving alcoholic liquors to his father's cook, and robbing him when he was helplessly drunk. Kaloustoff, a member of the superior classes, committed "sacrilege" by pretending to be dead and making himself the subject of a sham funeral, at which the Knaves of Hearts attended in great force, and for the most part in a state of intoxication. A lady who was a member of the club, a native of Irkutsk, Bashkiroff by name, had led "a stormy life," and had had "a series of love adventures, invariably, as she explained, preceded by promises of marriage, which were always violated." She ended by shooting an old gentleman because, she said, he "wished to treat her as all the others had done," though it is believed that he was disposed of as the possessor of secrets too dangerous to be left in his keeping.

It would be instructive to have precise information as to what sort of persons those thirty-six members of the "superior classes" were. It has been said that the Knaves of Hearts began their operations eighteen years ago. Two years ago they were convicted and sentenced. Meanwhile it had taken nine years to discover them and seven to find them guilty.

CHAPTER VIII.

PANSLAVONIANISM.

THERE are almost as many varieties of Panslavonianism as of Slavonians : and of Slavonians some belong to the Latin, others to the Greek Church ; some use the Cyrillic, others the Roman alphabet ; some look to Russia for aid and protection, others see in Russia a cruel and implacable enemy. In its origin, however, Panslavonianism was a theory described accurately enough by its name, as signifying the Union of all Slavonians. The earliest notions on the subject of Panslavonianism were conceived in the early part of the century by two Austrian Slavonians, Kollar and Schaffarik, and had scarcely more consistency than a dream. The Panslavonian theory elaborated by these writers was developed in a new form by the

Polish poet Mićkiewicz, who introduced the subject in his lectures on the Slavonians delivered some forty years ago at the College of France. Meanwhile the Russian poet Poushkin had given expression to Russian Panslavonian aspirations, and announced a sort of Panslavonic creed in some verses addressed to Western Europe on the Polish Insurrection of 1830. Slavonians, according to this poem, form a world apart, and must be allowed to settle their disputes and fight out their battles among themselves. If Poushkin's verses had been translated at the time into English, French, or German, the West of Europe would scarcely have understood them ; for while the last important war of Poland against Russia was being carried on, the fact that Russians and Poles were members of one great family was by no means familiar to the world at large.

Rousseau, in his *Confessions*, speaks of a "Slavonian" whom he knew in prison, and whom he also describes as a "Tartar," as though Tartar and Slavonian were synonymous terms. Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, places the various Slavonian dialects under the general head of "Germanic Languages"; though the very derivation of the word Slavonian, as he gives it, ought to have shown him that this classification was incorrect.

The science of ethnology was at that time in its infancy, and it was not until long afterwards that any

one thought of applying it to politics. The history of a nation was looked upon as more important than its origin ; and linguistic affinities, even had they been observed, would have counted for nothing. In the Vienna Treaty of 1815, the Poles in all parts of the Poland dismembered in 1772 were guaranteed the use of their language ; and to this stipulation the Russians never thought of objecting, as they would in the present day, that a large portion of the Polish provinces comprised in the Russian empire is inhabited by a peasantry which in an ethnological sense is not Polish, but Russian, or Ruthenian.

In the Panslavonianism imagined by Schaffarik and Kollar, no account was taken of frontiers or of political combinations of any kind, as actually existing. Slavonians, said the Slavonian professors, were the most dispersed and most enslaved of the three great European races. They possessed, however, as high qualities as either Latins or Germans, and, united in an independent confederation, would form a State of such power and influence as the world had not yet seen. The Slavonians of Bohemia were studious and learned ; the Slavonians of Servia, and of the South Slavonic countries generally, possessed high poetic qualities ; the Slavonians of Poland were brilliant warriors ; the Slavonians of Russia had a genius for military and political organization. Differing in many points, Russians, Poles, Servians, and Bohemians had very much in

common; and, in the first place, they spoke not indeed the same tongue, but dialects of the same language, which resembled one another as closely as did the dialects of ancient Greece.

Miçkiewicz, too, showed in his lectures that many of the greatest men in every department of human life were Slavonians, whose Slavonianism had been lost sight of through their having Latinised or Germanised their names. The first Reformers, John Huss and Jerome of Prague, were Slavonians of Bohemia, a circumstance in which Miçkiewicz, though an ardent Catholic, gloried, as do the patriotic Catholics of Bohemia to this day. Kopernik, or Copernicus, was a Slavonian of Poland, and that Copernicus so considered himself is in fact shown by his own signature in the books of the University of Bologna, "Copernicus, Polonus." Another Slavonian of Poland discovered the sexes of plants long before anything had been set forth on the subject by the botanists of other nations. Printing was a Slavonic invention, and its author, Gutenberg, was so called from having been born at Kutna-gora, *gora* being the equivalent in the Slavonic dialects for a hill or "berg." Faust might equally well have been claimed as a Slavonian; for all the legends told of Johannes Faustus are related amongst the Poles of one Twardowski, who is believed, moreover, like the native of Kutna-gora, to have invented printing.

Whether Gutenberg was a Slavonian or a German, it is quite certain that numbers of Slavonians are wrongly regarded as Germans by reason of their Germanised names. As in the Middle Ages learned men adorned their names with Latin terminations, so in Bohemia, when German civilization had prevailed over the civilization of the primitive Slavonian pattern, it was the fashion for men of culture and of distinguished birth to change their names, if possible, by a process of translation, from Slavonian into German. Thus, the Lichtensteins, among other noble families of Bohemia, had originally a Slavonian name, of which Lichtenstein is the German rendering.

Amongst great generals, the Slavonians have produced not only Sobieski, a Pole, but Belisarius, a Slavonian of the Balkan peninsula. The name of Belisarius proved him (so Mićkiewicz held) to be a Slavonian; for it was evidently derived from Bèlie Tzar—the “White Tzar.” At last, thinking of the tyrannical persecution to which his unhappy countrymen had been subjected in Russia, it occurred to Mićkiewicz that Slavonianism had its dark, its Babylonian side, and that Belshazzar, whose name had the same derivation as that of Belisarius, must have been a Slavonian. The most terrible, however, of all Slavonians was Nebuchadnezzar, whose name evidently came from Ne-bog-odin-tzar—“there is no God but the Tzar.” Justinian was a Slavonian who became

Latinised, and, writing in a new language, adopted a new name, which is only the Slavonic name, descriptive of his character as a codifier of laws, turned into Latin. Ovid has never been described as a Slavonian, though he is known to have passed a portion of his life at Tomi, in what is now called Bulgaria, and to have written a poem (unhappily lost) in the language of the natives—the so-called “Sarmatian.” As from the sublime to the ridiculous there is but one step, so the interval which separates such symbolism as Mićkiewicz detected in proper names from the paltriest kind of punning is by no means great. John Huss—otherwise, in Bohemian, John Gus, or goose—played upon his own name at the moment of death, saying that, “Though this goose might be burned, yet from its ashes would arise a bird that would carry the truth to the uttermost ends of the world.” But Huss spoke Bohemian amongst Bohemians; and to accept the Nebuchadnezzar story, it would be necessary to believe that “Ne-bog-odin-tzar” was a phrase intelligible to the Babylonians; in other words, that the Babylonians were a Slavonic race.

As all great personages who could be conveniently claimed were shown to be Slavonian, so were tribes and entire countries, with whatever eminent men they happened to have produced. Venice, or Venetia, was Slavonian; the district around Venice having been

colonised by the Venetes, or Wends. One of the earliest exponents of Panslavonianism showed by a curious process of reasoning, based little, if at all, on facts, that Shakespeare was a Slavonian; or that he was probably, or at least possibly, of Slavonian origin. The Slavonian tribe of the Veletes migrated to England at some pre-historic period, there settled, and gave their name to Wiltshire. Shakespeare's ancestors might have been born in Wiltshire. Therefore Shakespeare was a Slavonian, and a relative of Gutenberg, Belisarius, and Nebuchadnezzar.

For many years the Panslavonian doctrine was a doctrine and nothing more. Its professors did not trouble themselves to show how a race whose various branches were subject to Turkey, to Austria, to Prussia, or to Russia, could ever be united so as to form but one people and one State. It was evident, however, that if any such combination was to be brought about, it could only be achieved through the political agency of Russia, the one independent Slavonic State in the world. Russian despotism was indeed not a thing to be admired; but when Russia had accomplished her mission of bringing together the Slavonians into one fold, there was no reason why this despotism should continue. It could not fail to be modified through the influence of the Poles, the Bohemians, and the other Slavonians to the number of some forty millions, who would become Russian sub-

jects, or rather subjects of a great Slavonian empire. Russia, in any case, despotic or not, was the only country which could work out the Panslavonian problem; and such tyranny as she had shown in her treatment of the Poles—for this was her greatest reproach—would cease when Polish resistance ceased, and when Poles, Slavonians of Austria, and Slavonians of Turkey, were fellow-citizens of one Imperial Republic.

In those days language was accepted as a sure test of race, and the Russian language being of the Slavonic family, it seemed to follow that to this family the Russians themselves must belong. In one of the proclamations issued by the Polish commanders, during the insurrection of 1830, the Russians are spoken of as "Slavonians like ourselves." After a time, however, it occurred to some Polish writers that the Russians, whom they hated so much, and for such excellent reasons, were perhaps not Slavonians at all. The Poles knew better than all other Slavonians what absorption into the Russian empire really meant; and, unlike the Slavonian enthusiasts of Bohemia and of the Slavonic districts of Hungary, looked with aversion on all Panslavonian projects. The rhapsodies of Mićkiewicz produced but little effect on his countrymen; and if the teaching of Panslavonianism was accepted anywhere in Poland, it was in those parts which, without experience of Russian rule, had had bitter experience

of despotic government as exercised by the Austrians or by the Prussians.

In 1846 events occurred in Galicia which caused a Polish nobleman, destined afterwards to play an important though unsuccessful part in the history of his country, to advocate Panslavonianism, or so much of it as would unite the whole of Poland under the Russian sceptre; not as a theory to be realised in the distant future, but as a practical project to be at once put into execution. In 1846 the Poles were preparing to renew on Austrian territory the insurrection crushed out in 1831 by Russia. Unhappily, attempts were made to set going, at the same time and place, two insurrections of a totally different kind, though each, of course, had for its object the liberation of Galicia from Austrian dominion. One of these projected risings had a local and aristocratic origin; the other had been planned in Paris, by the extreme revolutionary section of the Polish emigration. Without considering what internal changes might be desirable, the aristocratic insurgents proposed simply to drive away the Austrians. They counted, no doubt, on a certain measure of support from their peasantry, but did not place much reliance on the masses. The democrats, on the other hand, were convinced that nothing could be done without the active assistance of the Galician serfs, whom they determined to propitiate by making them a present of their masters' land. The

proprietors, in preparing their insurrection, made no appeal to the peasantry, while the address circulated among the peasants by the democratic committee of Paris had the effect of disposing them much more against the Galician nobility than against the Austrian Government. This Government had, in fact, lost no opportunity of interposing on its own account between proprietor and peasant, in the character of the latter's friend. Accordingly, when the banner of Polish independence was raised in Galicia, the serfs refused to follow their masters into the field. They replied to threats by personal violence, and showed generally that they cared nothing for the independence of their native land, while they retained a very lively impression of the good offices performed for them by Austrian functionaries.

A certain amount of success seemed assured to the insurgents from the circumstance that the Government had no troops on the spot. This, however, was the immediate cause of the "Galician massacres," in which such horrors were perpetrated as have scarcely been exceeded even in Bulgaria. The Austrians were ready to accept assistance wherever they could find it; and proclamations were put forth, offering rewards for insurgents who should be captured and brought as prisoners to the nearest police-stations. The peasants in all the districts of Galicia, where the rising had taken place, and chiefly around Tarnow, in Western Galicia, took up

arms against the insurgents, plundered the manor-houses, massacred the nobles, and grossly maltreated those whom they did not kill. In some instances whole families were put to death ; and Prince Bismarck, many years later (1863), estimated the entire number of victims in the Galician massacres at one thousand. Among the ringleaders of the infuriated peasants was more than one notorious robber, who, after the suppression of the disorders in which a feeble patriotic rising had been crushed out by an effective insurrection of serfs, received the promised gratuities.

The Marquis Wielopolski was at this time (1846) living in the (Russian) kingdom of Poland, near the Galician frontier, and not far from Cracow. He had taken part in the insurrection of 1830, and had been sent as representative of the Polish Government to London, where he had a private interview with Lord Palmerston, which of course gave no result. It is said, too, that he was connected with the project of insurrection which failed so lamentably in Galicia. When, however, he found in what manner this hopeless attempt had been met by the Austrian Government, he took up his pen and wrote a letter to Prince Metternich, dating it from the neighbourhood of Cracow, "with the country houses all round still burning, and the serfs still wandering about half-mad with drink, spending in full liberty the money they had received from the Austrian officials as the wages of assassination." The

Marquis was a Russian subject, and could address the Austrian statesman in all security. He pointed out then what effect the barbarous conduct of the Austrian Government must have on the future position of the Poles, declaring in the first place, that it had reawakened that "inextinguishable hatred which the Poles as Slavonians must always feel for Germans." Now, for the first time, a Slavonian, and that Slavonian a Pole—a member, that is to say, of the one Slavonian nation which, as a nation, had shown itself the bitter enemy of Panslavonian projects—recommended in earnest and impassioned language to his countrymen the deliberate adoption of a Panslavonian policy. The Marquis Wielopolski had come to the conclusion that Poland had too long played the part of victim, and that she ought to make no more hopeless attempts to gain an impossible independence. There was now no foul weapon which her enemies were not ready to use against her. To Western Europe Poland was an object of purely theatrical interest; and the only power from which she could expect support and assistance towards unity and national life, if not towards independence, was Russia. He adjured his countrymen to forget the injuries they had received from the Russian Government, and to think only of its ability to rescue them from the tyranny and cruelty of Austria. Once united under the Russian crown, Poland, he maintained, would exercise an important influence on the destinies of the

Russian Empire. The Poles had hitherto been persecuted by Russia; but this persecution would come to an end if, instead of thwarting Russian policy, they did their best to forward it, "for their own advantage and the gratification of their own legitimate revenge."

"We cannot help asking," wrote the Marquis, in his eloquent *Letter from a Polish Gentleman to Prince Metternich*, "what advantage we have ever derived from German sympathies? What are the manifestations of Germany from which the future independence of Poland may be expected? These questions are answered by the terrible position in which Poland is now placed. Death on the gallows, or by the stick, Siberia and the torments of the dungeon, exile and misery, have for a long time been the only consequences brought upon us by the policy of the great German powers, who have hitherto only made use of the Polish national feeling as a tool for crippling the political advances of Russia. Applause was given to the Polish insurrection of 1831; Austria permitted a free passage through her territory to Poland for arms, money, and foreign officers; Galician land-owners who returned home after the failure of the same insurrection, received favours from the Government by the remission of many arrears with which their estates were burdened. All this was done because Slavonians were fighting against Slavonians, whose bloody struggle was an en-

joyable sight to the Germans. The severe measures of Russification adopted in the Russian part of Poland were ostensibly lamented, whilst every development of the Polish nationality was counteracted in Austria by that keeping down of intellect which is the political system of that government, and in Prussia by the so-called civilization, which means (as has been confessed by Mr. Flotwell, Wuttke, and others) a noiseless Germanisation, tolerating only so much of Polonism as may keep Russia in check by the Polish bugbear. The violent blows given by Russia to Polish nationality in order to murder it were loudly complained of, but it was found very just to prepare the death of the same nationality by a lingering consumption and absorption, brought about by the withdrawal of the means of its vitality. Austria's hitherto veiled hatred of Polonism sufficiently betrayed itself, when a foolish, puerile conspiracy of the Poles disconcerted for a moment the old political wisdom of that State, and seduced it into measures which may be compared to the celebrated Neapolitan counter-revolutionary alliance of the king and the clergy with the Lazzaroni, the Mammoni, and Fra Diavolo. The same occasion caused the press of Germany to resound with words of contempt and with the most worthless abuse against Polonism, pronounced with the greatest arrogance; it being declared that the destiny which Providence has assigned to the Poles was to *obey the Germans*, since everything remarkable that has

ever taken place not only in Poland, but also in Russia, is due to German agency.

“Those very men who so loudly uttered on the Rhine the words *Fatherland* and *National Rights*, curse the Pole when he pronounces the same words. If we have hitherto laboured under the delusion that all our woes come exclusively from Russia, may the present state of our country teach us to know better! The persecutions which had hitherto been looked upon as proceeding solely from Russia, come now from the quarter where, a short time before, our hopes were placed, and with the addition of two new deadly weapons suspended over our heads, namely, the flail of the instigated peasants and the daggers of the Polish demagogues, apparently generated by the rank suppuration of the cruelly irritated wound of the national body.”

Wielopolski called on his countrymen in all parts of Poland to turn with aversion from a Government which did not consider “the instigation of bands of assassins and robbers as too wicked a means for suppressing the outbreaks of our despair,” and to remember that while all the partitioning powers had persecuted the Poles in the past, there was but one of the three from which Poland had anything to hope in the future; and he declared that in this matter the voice of the common people was in accord with the “logical induction of the reflecting Polish politician.” This he sought to prove by pointing out that “the hitherto detested Russians

had recently, on their entrance into Cracow, been warmly greeted by the inhabitants; that the Russians had frequently protected the same inhabitants from the oppression of the Austrian soldiery, and that they enjoyed in the city such popularity that the funeral of a Russian officer had been attended by an immense concourse of people, who tore to pieces the velvet of his coffin and kept it as a relic, in order to manifest, in presence of the Germans, the sympathy the Slavonians felt for a Slavonian." This popular manifestation could only, argued the marquis, be the result of a spontaneous impulse. It must therefore be considered as a *Vox Dei*—and the maxim *Vox populi, vox Dei*, would be found in this case to be true. In conclusion, he exhorted his countrymen to give themselves up no more to "patriotic resignation," which was often only another name for idleness, and, above all, to engage no more in hopeless enterprises with a view to independence. "Surrounded as we are by the spies of the police, by revolted peasants who thirst for our blood and property, by the murderers of our fathers and brothers, who have already penetrated into our ante-rooms, we must no longer hope for comfort and quiet, even in the interior of our own homes." No very remote futurity might show the possible existence of several confederated Slavonic States, amongst which the Polish would, in conjunction with others, attain under Russian leadership a national, independent position; and, as the first

step towards this desirable result, the Poles must in concert offer the Russians the hand of friendship, "in order that our Slavonian brethren may see that our intention is real and that we are acting of our own accord."

The Marquis Wielopolski's letter met with but little success. In 1848, the Poles of Posen rose in insurrection against the Prussian Government, and in 1848-9 thousands of Poles joined the Hungarians in their war against Austria. No sign, however, was given of any disposition to come to terms with Russia, and the Russian intervention in Hungary was as much an intervention against Poland as against Hungary itself. That this was the view of the matter taken by the Emperor Nicholas, is sufficiently shown by the fact that the expenses of the intervention were charged in the Budget for the kingdom of Poland.

The Emperor Nicholas was no friend of revolutionary projects; and the theory of Panslavonianism could not be put into practice without breaking up Turkey, Austria, and even Prussia which has some millions of Slavonian subjects, not only in Posen but also in Silesia. So little was this very despotic but very orderly monarch inclined to favour the policy advocated by Wielopolski, that when the Galician disturbances had at last been brought to an end, he showed no desire whatever to include in his dominions that city of Cracow which had been the scene of such lively demon-

strations of friendship for Russia. He almost insisted on its annexation to Austria ; so that this last partition of Polish territory was by no means an advance in the direction of Panslavonianism.

Meanwhile, Panslavonianism had been cultivated in Russia by a small set of ardent-minded young men, several of whom were some years afterwards to become famous. Slavonianism as opposed to Germanism had, since the time of Peter the Great, been a sort of creed with those Russians who became known in Western Europe as the "old Russian party." This was simply a national party which objected to the reforms of Western pattern introduced forcibly into Russia, and which maintained that Russian civilization had received from Peter a wrong direction. The Russians who, at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries, opposed Peter's reforms were scarcely conscious of the fact that they spoke a Slavonic tongue, and had no idea whatever that the Poles and Bohemians, the Servians and the Slovacks, were their brothers, or at least their cousins, by ethnology. They took their stand on ancient custom, and loved to walk in the ancient paths, which they believed were the only ones to be trusted. Peter the Great, according to them, threw the nation out of the true channel of progress in which it was already advancing, by lessening the influence of the old nobility and raising to its political level a host of newly-made officials who corrupted

society ; while, by encouraging and even enforcing imitation of Western manners, he introduced a taste for luxury which nearly ruined the nobles, and increased in a proportionate degree the poverty of the peasantry.

The Slavophil, or as the Russians say, "Slavenophil," of this class has great faith in the Orthodox religion, and in its power to guard the inhabitants of Holy Russia against the perilous seductions of the West. In time when the Russians had begun to study the history and traditions of their Slavonian neighbours, the Russian Slavophiles extended their interest in things Slavonian to Servia, Bulgaria, and the other Slavonian provinces of the Turkish empire, who are bound to Russia partly by community of race, but also, and above all, by identity of religion. Societies were formed in Moscow for repairing churches and founding schools in the Slavonian provinces of Turkey ; though it was not until quite recently that these associations acquired a political character, and undertook to supply their clients in the Danubian provinces with money, arms, and ammunition—with the sinews and the muscles of war.

Panslavonianism, then, as it now exists, has had several different origins. (1.) In Hungary and Bohemia it had a literary origin, and was first suggested by the idea that a hundred millions of Slavonians—some of them, it is true, of by no means pure race—spoke dialects

of the same language, and if united, might form a powerful empire or confederation, in which those Slavonians who are now oppressed by foreign governments would be allowed the opportunity of developing their own national forms of civilization.

(2.) In Poland, Wielopolski had a certain number of followers who adopted Panslavonianism with the view of bringing together the various parts of the ancient republic under Russian leadership, but not necessarily under Russia's direct domination.

(3.) In Russia, long before the days of Kollar and Schaffarik, numbers of Russians, who for the most part had been unable to formulate their ideas on the subject, saw, not in Panslavonianism but in Russian Slavonianism, an escape from German influences, and the true means of civilizing Russia from within, as opposed to Peter the Great's method of half-civilizing the upper classes of Russia from without. Russian Slavonianism was destined to be afterwards developed as a theory into Panslavonianism, and as an active power into such Panslavonianism, or rather Polyslavonianism, as would include all Slavonian countries professing the Greek orthodox religion; such as Servia, Bulgaria, Bosnia, the Herzegovina and Montenegro.

The creed of Russian Slavonianism was to receive an additional article about the year 1844. The Slavophil believed in the ancient Russian whose caftan had been shortened and whose beard had been shaved by Peter

the Great. He believed, too, in the Russian Church ; and after Haxthausen's visit to Russia, he learned to believe in the Russian Commune. For the Russian Commune, of which so much is heard in the present day, was discovered by a German nobleman of conservative and even autocratic tendencies. Previously to Haxthausen's visit, the existence of the Russian Agricultural Commune must obviously have been known to the Russians ; only they failed to appreciate its importance. They did not recognise it as a typical Russian institution ; and it was reserved for Haxthausen to point out—as, by the way, Count von Moltke has also done in his recently published *Letters from Russia*—that it is the true remedy against pauperism and proletarianism. Alexander Herzen adopted with enthusiasm all that Haxthausen had written about communism as a preservative against pauperism. It might be injurious, he admitted, to agriculture as an art ; but it prevented the labourer from dying of hunger. Gradually Russian Slavophiles, Polyslavonians, and Pan-slavonians adopted the idea that in a thoroughly Slavonian country, organized on a true Slavonian basis, every inhabitant must belong to a commune, and thereby enjoy a right to a portion of communal land, as the country in general must belong to the Orthodox Church.

The original Russian Slavophiles were conservatives, and regretted the good old times, when no Peter the

Great had thought fit to import into Russia a weak imitation of West-European civilization. They mourned also for the decay of faith, by which the introduction of Peter's outlandish, unsympathetic, and anti-national reforms had been accompanied. But Alexander Herzen, a student of German philosophy and of the French literature of the eighteenth century, laughed at the religious notions entertained by these Slavennophils of an antiquated type. He was a Slavonian and even a Panslavonian; but he in no way set himself against the civilization of the West, nor did he care for the maintenance of the Russian Church even in Russia. He believed, however, in the future of his country, if its despotic form of government could be got rid of; was the declared enemy of Russian tyranny in Poland; wished to cultivate the good will of the Poles; and believed above all things in the Russian Commune, and the desirability of extending it to countries where it is at this moment unknown. Thus there were two kinds of Panslavonians in Russia: the conservative Panslavonian of a distinctly religious turn, and the ultra-liberal Panslavonian of anti-religious tendencies. Speaking generally, however, it may be said that the Russian apostles of Panslavonianism attached peculiar importance to two institutions, the Russian Church and the Russian Commune. A sort of "*Passez-moi la saignée, je vous passerai la rhubarbe*" arrangement was made between the two sections of the Russian

Slavonian party, by which the revolutionists seem to tolerate the Church on condition that the conservatives accept the Commune.

It has been said that the first practical experiment in Panslavonianism was devised and recommended for execution by the Marquis Wielopolski. Under the stern and stolid rule of Nicholas, it was impossible for the marquis to get his idea adopted, or in any way attended to by the Government. Some years, however, after the accession of Alexander II., at the beginning of the agitation in Poland which at last culminated in armed insurrection, the marquis went to St. Petersburg, and presented a plan which, in the hope of pacifying the country, the Government hastened to adopt. The author of the *Letter from a Polish Gentleman to Prince Metternich* had given proof of the sincerity of his views by sending his two sons into the Russian army ; which was probably the only means open to him of testifying in a public manner his firm adherence to the idea of union with Russia. The scheme which he proposed to the Emperor Alexander, when it had become evident that something must be done for Poland in the way either of conciliation or of suppression, included the dismissal from the Polish administration of every Russian. There were, as a matter of fact, but few Russian officials in Poland ; but these few were replaced by Poles. Practically, and for reasons of general convenience, Polish was still the language of the public

offices. It had, however, been formally superseded by Russian in a Government decree. The freest and fullest use of the Polish language was now restored, and Wielopolski secured for his country a complete system of what may be called "administrative autonomy." Eight Polish gymnasiums were to be established in various parts of the country, and the University of Warsaw, closed since 1831, was to be re-opened. Communal and district assemblies were moreover to be formed; and though these assemblies could not discuss political questions, they were to be of a representative character, and the entire direction of local affairs was to be entrusted to them. Finally, the affairs of the country were to be watched over by a Polish Council of State, and the one institution which Poland was to have in common with Russia was the army.

To endow Poland with national institutions was not to deal very largely in Panslavonianism. "National and representative institutions" are guaranteed to every part of ancient Poland by special clauses in the Treaty of Vienna, drawn up at a time when the notion of Panslavonianism had scarcely been conceived. A certain development, however, was given to Panslavonic ideas in connection with the University of Warsaw, where professorships were to be established of the various Slavonian languages. The salaries attached to these chairs averaged about one thousand pounds sterling a year; and it was hoped that some of

the most distinguished Slavonian writers and lecturers from Kieff, the capital of little Russia, from Prague, from Belgrade, and from the various divisions of ancient Poland, would be attracted to this focus of Panslavonianism. The Grand Duke Constantine, whom the Emperor had sent to Warsaw, as if in proof of the earnestness of his intentions, gave evidence of his adherence to the Panslavonian cause, and paid a special compliment to Bohemia by giving the name of Wenceslaus to the child of which the Grand Duchess was opportunely delivered soon after her arrival at Warsaw.

The reforms introduced by the Marquis Wielopolski, under the auspices of the Grand Duke Constantine, came too late. The Poles were already bent on insurrection, and looked upon the Russian concessions as tardy and insufficient, even if they did not regard them as so many proofs of weakness. But the marquis was determined to give his ideas what he considered a fair chance. A regular law of conscription had recently been introduced, by which, as in France and other continental countries, recruits were to be taken for the army by ballot, and not as formerly by arbitrary designation. Under the old system, the authorities had been able to send periodically to the army all unquiet spirits. Anything more tyrannical than this practice could scarcely be imagined. But the Marquis Wielopolski knew that a certain number of men belonging to the extreme revolutionary party had sworn at all hazards to

take up arms; and he determined that on the occasion of the coming conscription the new law should not be put in force, but that as formerly those should be taken as recruits whom it seemed most necessary to get rid of. The insurrection must have taken place under all circumstances. But Wielopolski's measure had the effect of precipitating it; and when the insurrection had once broken out, there was an end to his project of appeasing Poland by means of national institutions which he had hoped would gradually be extended to the Polish portions of Lithuania, and which might at last have attracted to the so-called "kingdom" the inhabitants of Austrian and Prussian Poland.

The Prussian Government was much opposed to the Wielopolski system; and its merit from Wielopolski's point of view was further shown by the dissatisfaction it caused in Austria.

Wielopolski's experiment in Poland was not encouraging to those Russians who believed in the possibility of some day uniting all the Slavonian nations in one great league; though the fact of the Poles having failed in 1863, as in 1830, to obtain assistance from the West, may well incline them to look no more in that direction for support. By Russian Panslavonians, however, this new rebellion was held to show that the Poles were incapable of accepting the "Slavonian idea." The Poles, it was said, had been demoralized by constant association with the West, by Latin civilization,

and, above all, by the influence of the Roman Catholic clergy. The Russians continued, however, to preach and even to put in practice their Russo-Slavonian creed, in which the orthodox Church and the agricultural commune were primary articles of faith.

Why the Russian administrators, sent into Poland after the insurrection of 1863 to arrange matters between peasants and proprietors, should be called "Panslavonians," is not clear : yet the late Mr. Miliutin and the late Prince Tcherkarsky are frequently so styled. All that they aimed at in Poland was to maintain, increase, and, if necessary, create antagonism between the nobles and the newly liberated serfs, and to secure to the latter, at the expense of the former, considerable allotments of land. In this matter the Russian Government and the officials by whom it was represented in Poland, with Tcherkarsky and Miliutin at their head, may well be blamed ; but it is only reasonable to remember that the state of things by which they sought to profit had been created by the Poles themselves. During the insurrection no one could be too generous in dealing with the Polish peasants. The "Provisional Government" began by giving them in freehold those portions of land for which they had been in the habit of performing task-work or of paying rent. In some of the villages the peasants are reported to have suggested that perhaps the present, like the Government which made it, was "provisional." Being in doubt,

however, what to do, and having been enjoined by the insurrectionary powers to pay no rent, they gave proof of their willingness to recognize the new authority by obeying its command in at least one particular. When the rising had at last been put down, the Russian Government, without maintaining the revolutionary decree in respect to the holdings of the peasantry, felt that it must in its own interest make at least an approach to the liberality displayed by the so-called "national junta."

A better field for the realization of the Russo-Slavonian ideas in connection with Panslavonianism presented itself in Lithuania, where the peasants are for the most part of Russian, or rather of Ruthenian race, and where for an entire generation the former Greek Uniates have been more or less sincere members of the Church called Orthodox. In Lithuania, then, steps were taken towards Panslavonianism by giving allotments of land to peasants of Russian race, and of the Russo-Greek Church, at the expense of Roman Catholic Polish proprietors, who received little more than nominal indemnification for the forced cession: in other words, a third part of the value of the land, as systematically under-estimated by Government officials.

The outbreak of the insurrection in Bosnia and the Herzegovina gave an opportunity for the Moscow Panslavonians to work their theory to effective political

purpose among the Slavonians of Turkey. Insurrection in the Sultan's dominions was not now for the first time encouraged by Russia; but hitherto the revolutionary work had been done, more or less secretly, by Government agents. In 1875 the Slavonian committee of Moscow, which, as before mentioned, had previously occupied itself with purely religious matters, such as the restoration of orthodox churches and the establishment of orthodox schools in Turkey, now for the first time collected subscriptions for the purchase of arms and ammunition, and for the equipment of volunteers. They entered into relations, moreover, with a distinguished general who had gained great successes in Central Asia, and who since his forced return to St. Petersburg had directed a newspaper of pronounced Panslavonian views.

Mr. Aksakoff, president of the Moscow Slavonic Committee, had, with several members of his family, been known for years past as a Slavophil rather than as a Panslavonian. What he had at heart was the development of the Slavonian element in Russia itself; and until a comparatively recent period he had troubled himself but little about the vast and impracticable project of bringing together all nations and nationalities of Slavonian descent within the frontiers of one empire or confederation.

In Poland—that is to say, the territory which was called Poland up to 1772—Aksakoff claimed for Russia

on ethnological, religious, and popular grounds—and not for State reasons or in virtue of treaties—all those provinces in which the great mass of the population spoke a Russian dialect, and belonged, whether as the result of forced conversion or otherwise, to the Orthodox Russian Church; but he did not deny the Poles full national rights in the so-called kingdom of Poland.

Similarly, he claims for Russia the eastern portion of Galicia, where, as in the greater part of Lithuania, the peasantry are of Russian, though not of Great-Russian race, and form the last remnant of that Greek Uniate Church, numbering now about three millions, which the Russian Government aims at bringing over to the Orthodox Church of Russia, after the example of millions of Greek Uniates in Lithuania. The Greek Uniate Church of Eastern Galicia must, as many of the Greek Uniate priests themselves think, and as not a few of them desire, be absorbed ere long in the Church of Russia. This result cannot but be hastened by the fact that while the Catholics of Poland look with mistrust on the Greek Uniates, and consider their Church as a sort of peasant Church, the Russians tempt them, encourage them, and hold out to their clergy prospects of an advancement which in the Roman Catholic Church they cannot hope to obtain.

The Greek Uniates, it may here be stated, are members of that now nearly extinct portion of the Greek Church which at the Council of Florence accepted union

with Rome, acknowledging the supremacy of the Pope and the doctrine of the Double Procession, while retaining for priests the privilege of marriage, and for priests and congregations the right of celebrating the service in ancient Russian or Church Slavonian. The non-celibacy of the clergy has proved a source of ruin to this Church. No menaces can force a priest of the Roman Catholic Church to abandon his religion. The priest, however, of the Greek Uniate Church has not to think of himself alone. He must also consider the fate of his wife and family ; and numbers of these priests, threatened with destitution, have given up the doctrine of the Double Procession and abjured Papal supremacy. If Russian Panslavonian devices should prosper much longer—if, for instance, they should prove thoroughly successful in connection with the Slavonian provinces of Turkey—the next direction taken by this powerful and penetrating dissolvent force would be that of Eastern Galicia, where of late Russian agents have been observed and even arrested. Stories of Russian agents and their intrigues are generally very vague, and often without any tangible basis. But the Russians arrested during the last year or two in various parts of Eastern Galicia were brought before Austrian law courts and formally charged with endeavouring to excite disaffection among the Russian (or Ruthenian) Greek Uniate peasantry. No one was convicted of any such offence. But arrests were made ; and the per-

sons arrested, being in some instances well-known professors of Panslavonianism, were sent under escort to the frontier. Not only have these affairs been chronicled in the Polish newspapers of Galicia and the German newspapers of Vienna; they have also been written about at length in the Russian or Ruthenian journal published at Lemberg, the chief town of Galicia, under the title of "Slovo" (The Word), and in various Russian newspapers. The organ of the Ruthenians of Eastern Galicia described the arrest and imprisonment of Mr. Ilovaiski in a tone of violent complaint, which was more than echoed by several of the St. Petersburg and Moscow journals.

In Eastern Galicia, then, as elsewhere, a kind of Panslavonianism is professed by Russian followers of the creed so denominated which appeals to those Slavonians only who are of the Russian race and who belong actually or prospectively to the Russian Church: for it may be looked upon as certain that, with judicious management on the part of Russia, the Greek Uniate peasantry and priests of Eastern Galicia will ere long be lost to the Church of Rome.

In the Balkan Peninsula, as in Eastern Galicia, the Russians find their adherents among those who are more or less of the same race, and who, apart from the question of church organization, are absolutely of the same religion as themselves. In Servia, for instance, not only do the inhabitants speak a Slavonian language

which has close affinities with Russian and is identical with it as regards the names of common objects, but they have also the same religious doctrines and even the same principles of religious persecution. Thus in Servia, as in Russia, it is a penal offence to forsake the National Church.

The Roumanians are not, it is hardly necessary to say, of the same race as the Russians, and no people have a greater fear of Panslavonianism than the Roumanians. They dread, according to the expression of a Servian writer, being "swallowed up in the Panslavonic ocean." Questions of language, race, and religion, possess an importance in Eastern Europe which the inhabitants of Western Europe can scarcely conceive; and sixteen years ago it occurred to the newly-formed Government of Roumania to avert the ever-present danger of getting "swallowed up in the Panslavonic ocean," by substituting in their prayer-books for the Cyrillic characters as preserved by Russians, Ruthenians of the Greek Uniate Church, Servians and Bulgarians, the Latin alphabet. The Roumanians then of their own accord formed a sort of union with Rome through the medium of the Latin letters. But the Roumanians are proud of their Roman descent, and perhaps one day, following in spirit the example of the modern Greeks, may make Latin their literary language, even as they have already adopted the Latin alphabet for Church purposes.

The Bulgarians have been shown by sworn enemies of Panslavonianism, and also by impartial students of history and ethnology, not to be Slavonian at all. An intelligent traveller who visited Turkey in the year 1763 (writing long before the invention of Panslavonianism, and at a time when the Russians were not yet accepted as a Slavonic nation*) says of the Bulgarians through whose country he passed :—

“The Bulgarians are the Scythian Tartars that speak a sort of Slavonian language. They eat raw horse-flesh, and put me in mind of the horrid description Juvenal gives of the Anthropophagi in his fifteenth satire :

‘Aspicimus populos, quorum non sufficit iræ
Occidisse aliquem ; sed pectora, brachia, vultus,
Crediderint genus esse cibi. Quid diceret ergo
Vel quo non fugeret ; si nunc hæc monstra videret
Pythagoras, cunctis animalibus abstinuit qui
Tantum homine, et ventri indulsit non omne legu-
men ?’

“They came originally from the Scythians, who inhabit the banks of the other side of the river Volga to the north of the Caspian sea. They are Christians, and are supposed to have adopted their religion from

* *A Voyage from Naples through the Arches to Constantinople in the year 1763.*

the discourse of certain bishops, whom these barbarians in their incursions into the Roman empire had taken prisoners. The description which Claudian gave formerly of their brethren the Huns, who inhabited the more northern parts up to the nook of the Caspian sea, suits them very well to this day."

The anonymous author of the work just cited obtained most of his information respecting the populations of the Balkan peninsula from the Greek monks in the convents where he frequently lodged; and the accounts given to him, apparently from tradition, as to the origin of the Bulgarians, coincide with those published by scientific ethnologists of the present day. The Bulgarians, then, are not Slavonians; nor, though they adopted ages ago a Slavonic dialect, is their language at this moment quite intelligible to Russians. In proof of this, it need only be mentioned on the authority of the correspondent of the St. Petersburg *Novoe Vremya* (New Time), quoted by the St. Petersburg correspondent of the *Standard*, in a letter dated September 27, 1877, that General Stoletoff, commander of the Bulgarian militia, unable to speak Bulgarian, found it more convenient to address his men in Turkish than in his own language; very much to their disgust. It has frequently been mentioned, too, in the war letters of Russian correspondents, that General Gourko was accompanied by a Bulgarian interpreter; which would be scarcely necessary

if Bulgarians and Russians spoke anything like the same tongue. These last-mentioned facts are well worth the consideration of those who believe that Panslavonianism has a perfect scientific basis. For practical political purposes, Panslavonianism rests no doubt in some measure on community of race and affinities of language. But it depends far more on identity of religion; while in Turkey it has derived its chief force from the fact that those who preached the doctrine and those who accepted it desired the same result: the liberation of the Slavonian provinces from Turkish domination.

If the Russians had advanced against Turkey without saying one word about community of race, the Bulgarians would all the same have been delighted to profit by their intervention, even as were the Moldo-Wallachians and the Greeks in former days, before Panslavonianism or the "rights of nationalities" in any shape had been dreamed of.

When ten or twelve years ago a Panslavonian Congress was held at Moscow, to which Servians, Ruthenians from Eastern Galicia, Czechs from Bohemia, and various kinds of Slavonians from the Slavonic districts of Hungary, were invited, but at which no Poles were present, it was found desirable, after several experiments with Slavonian tongues, to adopt German as the most suitable language of intercommunication between educated Slavonians. This, of course, was only a makeshift for the moment; but the proposal to select one

of the Slavonian dialects as a sort of literary and political language for Slavonians in general raised up numerous and insurmountable objections. Neither Servians, nor Bohemians, nor Russians wished to sacrifice their own particular tongue; and a Servian student who addressed the assembly pointed out that if some composite Slavonian language were invented for common literary purposes, Slavonians using it would become a sort of Brahmins among Slavonians in general. At this moment educated Slavonians have everywhere a second language, which is, in Bohemia and the Slavonian districts of Hungary, German; in Poland and Russia, French; in Servia, sometimes French, sometimes German.

Say, however, that the various branches of the Slavonian race understand one another no more than Dutchmen, Germans, Danes, and Swedes understand one another. That is of very little importance, in presence of the quite indisputable fact that there is a certain community of feeling among the various Slavonian peoples. The Czechs, for instance, of Bohemia, have always a warm welcome for Russians and everything that comes from Russia. Some two years ago, they gave an enthusiastic reception to General Tcherniaieff on his visiting them, after his campaign in Servia. Here, one of the Russian chiefs of Panslavonianism was treated as a hero, in the capital of Slavonian Bohemia, for having fought the battle of Slavonians in

Servia. A Russian, a Bohemian, and a Servian would not understand one another in conversation, if they once departed from the simplest subjects treated in the simplest phraseology. But there is a full understanding between them as regards certain objects at which they all aim; and they all agree in detesting Turks for the sake of South Slavonians, and Germans for the sake of North Slavonians and Slavonians in general.

The hatred between Germans and Slavonians is as old as the days of Tacitus, who speaks of it at the beginning of the *Germania*; and it has been seen from Wielopolski's *Letter to Prince Metternich*, that it is in virtue of the ancient and still more of the modern antagonism between the two races, that the Poles are called upon to cast their lot with Slavonian Russia.

The Poles, however, have objected hitherto to being swallowed up, as the Roumanians say, in the "ocean of Panslavonianism"; and those amongst them who think it worth while to argue scientifically on the matter begin by saying that the Russians themselves are not Slavonians. This, however, is as futile an argument as those which may be drawn from inability of Bulgarian volunteers to understand Russian, and from the "Scythian" or Finnish origin of the Bulgarian race. Lelewel, the Polish historian, has shown very clearly in his *History of Lithuania and Ruthenia* that the Muscovite Russians, or inhabitants of Great Russia, are not altogether of the same race as those "Rus-

sians" of whom many millions were formerly subject to Poland, and who in mediæval Latin were all called "Rutheni." But this had already been admitted by Russian historians, who have never pretended that the Muscovites were pure Slavonians, or that Moscow was founded in the midst of Slavonian lands. Still, Russians of the present day speak of themselves as Slavonians with a certain admixture of the Tartar element; whereas those Poles of the present day—the great majority of the Polish nation—who are utterly opposed to Panslavonianism, and who hate Russia for a great number of excellent reasons, declare that the Russians are not Slavonians at all, but "Tartars slightly Slavonianized." Writing many years later than Lelewel, Duchinski, a Pole, or rather (for one must be particular in these matters) a Ruthenian with Polish sympathies and a Polish education, produced a very ingenious book on the Turanian origin of the Russians, in which he seeks to show that the Russians possess inherited and ineradicable habits derived from Central Asiatic ancestors of nomadic and pastoral instincts, whereas the Poles possess inherited and ineradicable habits derived from Caucasian ancestors of agricultural instincts. The object of the book is apparently to prove that the Russians, though they have beaten the Poles, are people of bad birth; for though it is no longer accounted in good taste to reproach a low-born individual with the baseness of his origin, this supposed offence may freely be com-

mitted against an entire nation. Mr. Duchinski, however, points out for the consolation of the Russians, whom he systematically endeavours to reduce to the moral and intellectual level of niggers, that though the agricultural section of the human race includes, as a rule, all that is good, and the pastoral section all that is bad, yet that Abel was a shepherd, and Cain a tiller of the soil.

Count Joseph de Maistre says somewhere, that having one day put to a general of his acquaintance the question, "How a general knew when he was beaten?" he was told in reply that "a general was beaten when he considered himself beaten." In like manner, it may be said that a more or less Slavonian nation is sufficiently Slavonian for Panslavonic purposes when it considers itself Slavonian. Whatever Lelewel or Duchinski, whatever absolute historical or ethnological truth may say on the subject, the Russians are accepted as Slavonians; and though they can never make any impression on Catholic Poles, and though it is more than probable that the Catholic Slavonians of Bohemia, like the Ruthenians of Eastern Galicia, make use of Panslavonianism chiefly as a bugbear by which to extort concessions from the Austrian Government, yet Panslavonianism is a living force as regards the Slavonian populations of Eastern Europe, and all who are or consider themselves to be of Slavonic race, and who profess the doctrines of the Orthodox Church.

CHAPTER IX.

A PANSLAVONIAN AGENT IN EASTERN GALICIA.

IN Eastern Galicia—the “Russian Bosnia,” as it is called in the language of Russian Panslavonianism—the peasantry are of what, in a wide ethnological sense, may be termed the “Russian race,” and they belong to the Greek Uniate Church. Here, then, are two reasons why the Russians of the Russian empire should wish to rescue them from beneath the dominion of Polish proprietors and bring them within the Russian fold. One would think that the mere fact of nearly all the peasantry and by far the greater part of the priests being Greek Uniates would be enough to make the population of Eastern Galicia in the mass exceedingly hostile to Russia. So, in the mass, it may be. There is a Russian party in Eastern Galicia all the same; and priests and theological students of the Greek Uniate Church—persuaded that they would have more chance of an

important future in the Russian than in the Roman Church—are at its head. The Russian leanings of this party are represented by a satirical paper and a serious paper, the latter of which, called *Slovo* (the “Word”), published, towards the close of the Russo-Turkish war, an account of the arrest of a supposed Russian agent, who declared that he was visiting Eastern Galicia in the character of an historical and ethnological observer, but was suspected by the Polish authorities of being a political agitator. The Russian or Ruthenian portion of Galicia, which the Russians claim in virtue of the principle of nationality and of alleged sympathy for Russia on the part of the population, was said to have been much disturbed of late; and this report was confirmed, directly and indirectly, by the *Slovo*’s narrative of the Russian visitor’s arrest.

The visitor in question was Mr. Ilovaisky, a writer on archæological and bibliographical subjects, who, returning from the seat of war in European Turkey, turned off, on the road home, to visit Halitch, once the capital of the duchy so named, now a town of no great importance in Eastern Galicia. At Halitch he called on a local priest, Marion Matkowski, who, however, turned out to be a Pole, a Roman Catholic, and, as a natural consequence, a hater of Russians. Matkowski received his Russian visitor abruptly, and referred him to the Greek Uniate priest, a Ruthenian named Marewitch. Pressed for time, Ilovaisky begged Marewitch to take him at once,

though rain was falling in torrents, to see the church built ages ago by the Dukes of Halitch. On his way to the sacred edifice he was shocked to see so many Jews; whose presence in this and other Polish towns he attributed to the pernicious influence of Polish institutions in the days of the old Republic. He had not proceeded far when he found that Matkowski, the Pole, had set the whole of the available police force at the heels of the "dangerous Muscovite agent," as the *Słowo* ironically called him. Returning to his inn, which was kept by "dirty Jews," Ilovaisky found two gendarmes waiting for him; and it having been proved in presence of Pschesvitzky, the burgomaster, that his passport bore no Austrian visa, a search was ordered. Thereupon Ilovaisky's room was visited. More than that, a "red-headed official," attended by a certain number of satellites, "burrowed in his things, took, or rather tore, his coat off, and shook out his pockets"; all this being "done with open doors, in presence of a crowd of staring Jews." The only articles deemed suspicious among the contents of the Russian gentleman's baggage were three guide-books, a map of the theatre of war, and a small travelling revolver. However, a sentinel was placed at his door, and the next morning he was sent under escort to the town of Stanislav. From Stanislav, after having been judicially examined, the captive was sent on to Lemberg, where he was thrown into prison. "He had a room to himself, it is true; but the window

of the room had iron bars." He was not allowed to telegraph; and he was called upon to establish his identity and to show that he had "no bad intentions in connection with Galicia."

Mr. Ilovaisky had been to Lemberg before, and had had friends living there. But one of these, Bielewski, editor of the *Polish Historical Monuments*, was dead; while another, the Greek Uniate Canon, Petruszevitch, well known for his historical and philological works, was at Vienna attending to his duties as deputy. The only friend he could find at Lemberg was Plostchanski, editor of the *Slovo*; but the evidence given by the director of this Ruthenian and quasi-Russian journal was "not considered sufficient." At last the authorities consented to telegraph to the Russian Embassy at Vienna. But it was difficult to know whether the telegram was really sent off, and after a time Ilovaisky was liberated through the intercession of Plostchanski. This "venerable worker in Russian Galicia" pointed out the injustice of the proceedings, and showed what were the character and occupation of the suspected man. Ultimately the police took him to the Russian frontier. The Galician-Russian students of the Lemberg University were preparing, it was said, "an address of sympathy"; but they had not time to present it.

The "Polish authorities" accounted for their conduct by saying that Mr. Ilovaisky had been several times in Austria without getting his passport visaed.

But Poles and even Polish officials all admitted that this was only a pretext, and that "the treatment he had received was simply due to the fact that he was a Russian. He knew that the Poles of Galicia hated the Russians; but he had thought that "respect for the constitutional laws of Galicia and for the Russian Embassy at Vienna would have guaranteed him against personal insult." Such not being the case, it occurred to him that "if the Russian diplomatic agents were not in a position to prevent such outrages, they might at least issue circulars warning Russian travellers of the treatment they may expect from Polish Turcophils."

A little while before a Russian major had, it appeared, been arrested on the ground of his passport not being in order, and had been kept in prison for fourteen days, while the police were inquiring about his nationality. "These arrests," concluded the article in the *Slovo*, "of Russian travellers, who are sent out under military escort, increase the agitation in Galicia on the subject of Muscovite agitators, who are supposed to be studying strategical points, or trying to raise up the Russian (*i.e.* Ruthenian) peasantry. The German-Jewish organs see in every Russian traveller a Panslavonian agent."

CHAPTER X.

THE RUSSIANS IN POLAND.

THE Polish insurrection of 1863 originated as an armed movement in the resistance of a portion of the population to the execution of a measure of recruitment, which had all the character of a proscription, and was directed against the younger inhabitants of towns as against a class bent at all hazards on subverting the Russian dominion in Poland, and already to a great extent leagued together for that purpose, and bound by oath to a secret governing committee. Nevertheless, the Russian official accounts represented the Poles as the aggressors, and, putting aside the military kidnapping as a detail without importance, declared that the origin of the actual conflict was a treacherous massacre of peaceable Russian soldiers by fanatical Polish revolutionists. In fact, on the night of the 22nd

January, eight days after the recruitment had been effected at Warsaw, and when it was about to be carried out in the provinces, the Poles in several villages and small towns rose by order of the central insurrectional committee, fell upon the Russian troops in their cantonments, killed some, disarmed others, and in one place set fire to a house from which three soldiers were defending themselves, who, refusing to come out and surrender, perished in the flames. This is the one "atrocities" mentioned in the Russian official accounts of the outbreak, unless the attempt made throughout the country to surprise the Russian troops be regarded in itself as such.

In the histories of the insurrection fabricated for the benefit of the Russian people, and distributed gratuitously, or sold at nominal prices in the villages and at the large fairs in Russia, great stress is laid upon this so-called massacre, without any mention whatever being made of the odious measure by which the attempt at a general rising was immediately provoked. The Russian Government, moreover, the better to excite the hatred of the Russian peasantry, and of the Ruthenian peasantry belonging to the Russian Church, against the Poles, attributed to the Polish movement on behalf of national independence a special religious and propagandist character. "Oh, what orthodox blood was shed that night by men calling themselves Christians!" says a passage in an address

to the Ruthenian peasantry issued from Kieff; while a pamphlet published at Moscow under the title of *Russian Truth and Polish Lying* (the title printed in Church-Slavonian characters, with "Lord have mercy upon us!" as an epigraph) set forth that the intention of the Poles was to re-establish serfdom, to convert the Russians by force to the Roman Catholic religion, and to "introduce into the Russian Churches the abomination that maketh desolate predicted by the prophet Daniel."

The Russian journals, all tuned to the same official note, cried with one accord that the true object of the Poles in rising against the Imperial Government was to regain exclusive privileges for the Polish nobility and to re-establish the authority of the proprietors over the peasantry.

The Russians cannot believe, or at least will not admit, that the Poles suffer from being subjected to the rule of a foreign, and in many respects barbarous, power, which year after year marked out and seized all their most promising young men in the schools and gymnasiums to bury them in the Russian army, which closed their universities, carried off their libraries, forbade the establishment of every useful and necessary institution, and, in a word, systematically impeded the development of their country with a view of rendering it too feeble for resistance; but they consider it quite natural that the Polish proprietors should wish

to keep their peasants in a species of serfdom, and that the whole civilized population, or at least members of every class belonging to it, and especially the working men, should fly to arms, with death or exile as their reward in case of defeat, not to free Poland from Russian dominion, but simply to prevent any improvement being effected in the position of the Polish peasantry.

After circulating such detestable calumnies as this, what pity do the Russians deserve when they complain that the West of Europe accepts all the accusations brought against them by the Poles without listening to anything they may have to say in self-defence?

The West of Europe knows that Russia is obliged to give a very bad character to the Poles in order to justify her treatment of Poland; and it doubts the sincerity of those who attribute vices to an enemy and then plunder him by way of punishment. As to the emancipation of the serfs, that measure, whatever may be said about it now when it is too late to protest any longer, met, when it was first proposed, with strenuous opposition from a large portion of the Russian proprietors; and the reproaches on the subject addressed by the Emperor to the nobility of Moscow were recorded at the time in the Russian official journals, and republished in every newspaper in Europe. On the other hand, the thanks addressed by His Majesty to the nobles of the Polish provinces

incorporated with the Russian empire for their immediate and spontaneous assent to his proposition have been recorded and republished in a similar manner.

The nobles of Moscow, when the emancipation scheme had become law, evinced their profound irritation by voting with scarcely a dissentient voice an illegal address to the Crown, demanding in pressing terms a complete change in the system of government, and the immediate publication of a constitution, in the utility of which few beyond those who actually proposed it were suspected of believing. The Russians seem to imagine that the more serious opposition offered soon afterwards by Poland as a nation proceeded in a similar manner from a wish to avenge upon the Russian Government the benefits it had conferred upon the Polish peasantry, and that if the first object of the Poles was to liberate their country from foreign domination, their second was to replace their peasantry in a state of slavery. Although if this argument be maintained at all it must be maintained in the teeth of facts, it is much employed both by Russians who are really ignorant of the facts and by Russians who wilfully ignore them. Now as to the real cause and also the real object of the insurrection, Lord Russell, unable in a diplomatic despatch to state the simple fact that the Poles rise from time to time against the governments imposed upon them because they abhor foreign rule, was obliged in his correspondence with

the Russian Government to argue that the insurrection of 1863 was caused by the government of the Emperor Nicholas from 1831 to 1855. But the execrable system of Nicholas alone, without the relaxation of that system by which the accession of the present Emperor was followed, could not—whatever other evils it may have produced—have caused an insurrection; for no one dared rise against it. The peaceful attitude of the Poles during the Crimean war, when for the first time they found England and France united in arms against Russia has been accounted for in various ways; by the material prosperity of the country, most remarkable just then, by the fact that the Poles were quite unprepared for war, and finally by a belief that the time of action had not arrived, and that if Poland waited she would be appealed to and offered terms by the allies.

In fact, the chief of the Polish emigration was sounded on the subject; when he informed the French Government that the Poles would not stir unless the allies formally engaged to obtain a certain minimum of concessions for them as one of the conditions of peace. At the same time orders were sent to Warsaw to keep quiet—rather unnecessarily, it would seem, for Warsaw swarmed with police agents and spies and was occupied by a large army. Russia, pressed as she was on the Baltic and on the Black Sea, yet found means to keep one hundred thousand men in Poland during the Crimean

war. This seems to have been the chief reason why Poland gave no sign of life at a time when, had she risen, France and England could scarcely have avoided making her cause to some extent their own. She had been terrorized by the Emperor Nicholas to such a degree, that she feared Russia even when Russia had France, England, Turkey and Piedmont to contend with.

The Emperor Nicholas being dead, and a sovereign of quite a different character having ascended the throne, a reaction took place, and the Poles gradually proceeded from an attitude of defiance and menace to open insurrection, and without any promises, without any reasonable expectations even of foreign assistance, and almost entirely unprovided with arms and ammunition, engaged single-handed in a struggle with the whole force of the Russian empire.

In 1830, when they had thirty thousand of the best troops in Europe to begin their insurrection with, and when they had the whole country in their hands, with a peasantry to whom the Russians were really foreigners, and who had never in a direct manner felt the force of Russian rule, they adopted a dignified and as much as possible a conciliatory tone towards the Russians, and assured them that their war was with the Russian Government, but that they had no hatred for the Russian people, "who are Slavonians, like ourselves." For some months the insurrection of 1830 had

purely a political character, nothing was said about separation from Russia, the Russians were spoken of as fellow subjects, and the government of the country was carried on in the name of the Emperor Nicholas. At that time the Poles of the "kingdom" had only been fifteen years under the Russian sceptre, and though they had an emperor of Russia for their constitutional king and a Russian grand duke for the commander-in-chief of their national army, they retained the complete direction of their own internal affairs. Indeed, in spite of many cases of individual persecution, the national life of the Poles had been very little interfered with, even in Lithuania and the other provinces (Volhynia, Podolia and Kieff) acquired by Russia at the partitions of the eighteenth century. After the suppression of the insurrection of 1830, however, the Poles had to pass through a quarter of a century of unexampled and almost inconceivable oppression; and in 1863, though the Russians had certainly improved since the time of Nicholas, and at least had introduced a national administration and an excellent system of national education in Poland, the Poles rose with a feeling of intense national hatred, declared war against the Russians as a people, and lost no opportunity of representing them as savages, incapable, by race and from their very nature, of being civilized. The system of Nicholas then, if it did not produce, at least prepared the way for the insurrection of 1863, which, however,

was caused above all by a belief that Russia was exhausted, and that the power which had helped Italy to gain her independence would not abandon Poland in a similar struggle.

The Russians argue now that the concessions made to the Poles by the Emperor Alexander encouraged them to rise, and that but for the national administration introduced at the urgent solicitation of the Marquis Wielopolski, the organization on which the insurrection was based would have been impossible. The fact is, the reforms, whether sufficient or insufficient, were introduced at a time of great excitement, when it was too late to give them a fair trial, and when a small but desperate party had already resolved at all hazards to take up arms. It was an evil resolution. It was not merely the *væ victis* character of the struggle that had to be dreaded, but also the terrible means by which alone it could be carried on.

In 1830 the war was in one sense a civil war, but all Poland was in arms against Russia, the contest was above ground, and every Pole was the avowed enemy of every Russian.

In this last insurrection many of the chiefs fought under assumed names, and had deserted the Russian army—which, however, they had in most cases been forced to enter. Numbers of insurgents were the sons of proprietors who could not openly defy the Government, or their estates would have been con-

fiscated, and who had to plead compulsion when they were charged with having furnished supplies to their own countrymen. In the same family one brother would be fighting in the woods, while another would be working in some Government office—unable, it is true, to leave his post, for the very fact of doing so would have exposed him to suspicion at a time when suspicion, accusation, and exile followed one another in close succession without the existence of proof being at all required. Officials nominally in the service of the Russian Government were actually helping the insurrection—at the peril, no doubt, of their lives, but in violation also of their oaths. In short, thousands of Poles who had not only not declared war against the Government, but who still wore the Government uniform, were fighting against it in secret, and could scarcely do otherwise—for how could they refuse to help their own countrymen against the Russians? The timid peasants, threatened, maltreated, and put to death if they assisted the insurgents, had to be treated with at least equal severity by the insurgents to prevent them from leaning too much to the Russian side. Then, as the Russians maintained spies, it was absolutely necessary to kill the spies, or the secrets of the anonymous government would have been discovered.

We all know that the Poles have no objection to open war when open war is possible, but what were they to do without arms, without a single town to

themselves, and with their enemies spread over the whole face of the country? All that need be said is, that they were placed in most trying circumstances by a deplorable insurrection, which was not and could not be an insurrection of the whole country; though all the townspeople, together with every educated man in the rural districts and every man habitually brought into relations with educated people, prayed for its success. But for those daring reckless spirits who were ready to risk an appeal to arms there were no arms to be had. The peasantry, who had their scythes, were, for the most part, neutral, and were even inclined here and there to take the side of the Government, which they felt was the safe side in the long run. The great proprietors, though by no means neutral, had the fear of confiscation before their eyes, and could only aid the insurrection cautiously, secretly, and by means of money, which, when they had once joined the movement, they gave abundantly.

If, however, the Poles engaged in a desperate struggle with the certainty of incurring the most terrible losses in case of failure, it must also be remembered that they had a great prize in view. They were fighting for the independence of their country as it existed before the partitions of the eighteenth century, and for the immediate liberation of all Russian Poland as a first step towards that end.

Unfortunately the educated class is very small in

Poland, and in those provinces where the peasantry intent only on cultivating their fields in peace are very numerous, and where the proprietors and the inhabitants of towns are but few, no movement on behalf of national independence, unless supported by a regular army, can meet with even a momentary success. Indeed, in those parts of ancient Poland where the peasant was until quite recently a serf—that is to say, in the Polish provinces incorporated with the Russian empire where emancipation has only just taken place, and in Galicia, where it dates only from 1847-48—the peasantry are far more inclined to oppose than to support a national movement. They prefer safety and the existing order of things under which they are free, to danger and a return to an ancient system under which all they remember is that they were slaves. With only a very small number of Poles ready to risk their lives on behalf of national independence, and with three great military governments ready to assist one another in crushing any such movement, how is it that Poland ever thinks of stirring? Because with the credulity of extreme misery she trusts too much to her own strength, to the weakness of her enemies, and to the sincerity of her friends.

No one assisted Poland when she rose under Kosciuszko in 1794, immediately before the third partition. Napoleon assisted her in 1806, and out of the provinces from which the Prussians had been expelled formed

the Duchy of Warsaw : he also drew from the Duchy an army of one hundred thousand men for his Spanish and other wars. No one helped the Poles in 1830 against Russia, nor in 1846 against Austria, nor in 1848 against Prussia, and in 1863 they were left once more to fight a hopeless battle against Russia, not without implied promises of help, but without any actual aid.

As regards the last insurrection, however, the Poles were far too ready to believe what their countrymen abroad were too ready to tell them as to the supposed chances of an intervention. The Polish National Government, on the other hand, and the Polish newspapers misled the West of Europe as to the importance of the insurrection.

The Poles rarely if ever acknowledged that they had lost a battle, though, as every one of their very numerous detachments was in the end broken up, they must have been defeated altogether several hundred times.

The French, English, and many of the German newspapers were so anxious the Poles should be victorious that they readily and most willingly placed confidence in all accounts of Polish victories that reached them.

If anyone told the truth as to the hopeless character of the movement, and the terrible calamities it would inevitably draw down upon the Poles, he was looked upon as an illiberal, hard-hearted person, and a friend of the despotic Government, to which the Polish insurrec-

tion has been as much an advantage as to Poland it has been a misfortune. In short, there seemed to be a general understanding in Europe to force Russia to strengthen herself and to force Poland to destroy herself. When Russia was evidently strong, no one would venture to attack her; and when Poland was obviously exhausted, everyone deserted her.

It may be said that, after all, the probability of the Polish insurrection failing or succeeding was a matter of opinion, as it is also a matter of opinion whether a new flying-machine will answer, or whether a man disabled and without arms can fight with advantage against a tiger. Speculators who make mistakes in such matters, and who mislead others, are very dangerous members of society, and some of our professed revolutionists have been doing this sort of thing all their lives.

The art of getting up revolutions is as little understood in England as that of getting up joint stock companies seems to be in most parts of the Continent. The reason, no doubt, is that for the former kind of speculation a vast number of grievances are necessary, and for the latter a large amount of capital. The grievances must not be imaginary nor the capital fictitious, or neither enterprise can be set going, however much it may be talked about for a little while. But in England, except when money is unusually "tight," almost any industrial or commercial scheme can be

started if experienced speculators will only take it in hand ; and in Poland, the richest of all countries in misfortune, a professional revolutionist can always get up an insurrection, except, indeed, in such periods of tightness as existed during the reign of the Emperor Nicholas, when grievances were locked up because it was dangerous to show them. The revolutionary speculators, like the commercial ones, are generally sincere as far as a belief in the success of their own schemes is concerned, and as the former are not afraid of death, so the latter do not fear that milder form of dissolution known as bankruptcy.

Admitting the object in view to be good, it is upon this question of success, or rather the antecedent probabilities of success, that the whole morality of speculation, whether based upon joint stock companies or upon secret political societies, must be held to depend. It is in vain for the getter-up of companies to plead that an enterprise in which by his earnest representations he has caused thousands to lose their property was really a *bond fide* affair, if at the same time it never had any chance of prospering ; and it is no use telling us that the sole object of the Polish revolutionists in urging their countrymen sixteen years ago to take up arms was to relieve them from oppression, if it was evident from the first that the object could not be attained by the means proposed, and that to attempt it would only render the position of the sufferers ten times worse than

before. The failure of an insurrection against such a power as Russia does not mean simply defeat in the field, but the execution of hundreds, the banishment of thousands and tens of thousands, the depopulation of entire districts, the disorganization of society, and the denationalization as far as possible of the whole insurgent country.

There is one potent cause, in addition to the existence of permanent grievances such as must be felt by every man capable of the slightest patriotic feeling, which renders Poland a most promising soil for the schemes of revolutionists. The Polish flag, whenever and by whomsoever hoisted, is sure to attract not only those who fly to it at once from ungovernable enthusiasm, but also a great many others who dare not say positively that the time for hoisting it has not yet arrived, and who, however much they may object to its being raised inopportunely, at least cannot help to drag it down.

The Poles are highly sensitive, and they have so long been reproached with factiousness, that if at a given moment an important part of the nation is opposed sincerely and conscientiously to a movement in behalf of national independence, it is afraid, nevertheless, to pronounce its opinion openly and before all the world. The extreme party does not hesitate to accuse of want of patriotism all who are unwilling to encourage it in hopeless attempts, and these accusations are so intolerable to the moderate party, and it is so impossible

for this party to unite with a foreign government against any portion of its own countrymen, that the most extreme men in Poland have only to begin to act in order to be joined, one after the other, by numbers who have no faith at all in their projects.

In a free country one part of the nation may be for war and another against it. But in Poland, whenever there is any question of war against Russia, no men calling themselves Poles can say much against it without seeming to place themselves on the Russian side. This is one of the misfortunes arising naturally from the position of the Poles; but, though it has proved a misfortune hitherto, it is at the same time an honour to the country that such a feeling should exist, and it may one day be found a source of strength.

CHAPTER XI.

THE RUSSIANS IN CENTRAL ASIA.

How often have we been assured that Russia, in advancing towards the Oxus, can have no intention of attacking our Indian possessions?—nor does even Mr. Vambéry, or the most vigilant of our so-called “alarmists,” suggest that Russia proposes deliberately to invade India with a view to conquest. On the other hand the most credulous of quietists must now admit that, in case of war with England, Russia might cause diversions useful to her arms by making demonstrations or encouraging independent expeditions in the neighbourhood of our Indian frontier. Since the beginning of the present century the notion of attacking England through India has been entertained three times by the Russian Government; that is to say, whenever Russia

and England have been at war or on the point of going to war. In 1801 the Emperor Paul equipped and despatched an expedition to India. In '1807 Alexander I. and Napoleon discussed and arranged the preliminaries of an expedition to India. In 1854 General Duhamel proposed to the Emperor Nicholas an expedition to India. Moreover, in 1814 the British Government, believing in the possibility of a Russian expedition to India at some future time, made a treaty with Persia by which the Persians bound themselves to stop it—a feat which, if only for geographical reasons, they might have found it difficult to perform. None of the expeditions spoken of could, it may be said, have been carried to a successful end. That, however, is not the question. The question is whether, in case of war against England, one of the first ideas that would occur to Russia would not be to threaten us in our Indian possessions.

In 1801, on the 2nd of January, the Emperor Paul gave secret orders to Orloff 'Ataman, of the Cossacks, to lead his Cossack regiments to India. For the expenses of the journey two million six hundred and seventy thousand pounds were allowed out of the Treasury, "to be expended in pay, provisions, and forage," the money to be returned from the "booty made in the expedition." In giving directions for the march, the Emperor Paul wrote to Orloff: "Go with the artillery straight through Bokhara and Khiva ["Khiva

and Bokhara" would have been better] to the river Indus and the adjacent English possessions. All the riches of India will be your reward for this expedition." After such a liberal promise, it was worth Orloff's while to exert himself. So with twenty-two thousand Cossacks, forty-four thousand horses (apparently for train), two companies of horse artillery—being perfectly ignorant of the road to India—he "started," as a Russian writer puts it, "for the treasures of the Rajahs and the Nabobs."

The march was exceedingly difficult, especially as it was winter—winter campaigning in the steppes has since Perovski's disaster been given up. Nevertheless, in not quite a month Orloff made six hundred and eighty-five versts, and he had just reached the heights of Irghis, when he received a manifesto announcing the accession of Alexander I., and at the same time an order from the new emperor commanding him to abandon what the Russian writer from whom I cite these particulars calls "this fantastic enterprise."

The expedition of 1807, with Cossacks in advance and French infantry in the main body, was to have passed through Persia. The invasion of India proposed by General Duhamel to the Emperor Nicholas was also to have been executed through Persia. No reasonable doubt can be entertained in the present day as to whether in case of war Russia would form projects for disturbing our position in India. Nor can

there be any question as to whether she is more favourably placed for carrying out such projects now than she was in 1801, when they were indeed "fantastic," or in 1807, and again in 1854, when they were beset with difficulties.

Not to speak of 1807, the Russians in 1854 were scarcely established at the mouth of the Jaxartes. Now they have the whole course of the Oxus beneath their control, with the right, formally admitted by the English Government, of occupying territory as far as the right bank of that river, and with the intention, clearly announced by actions on their side, feebly contested in words on ours, of seizing important districts and strategical points to the left of the stream and far away from the stream in the direction both of Afghanistan and of Persia. In 1854, too, they had the mountaineers of the Caucasus to count with. Now in any expedition, whether of demonstration or of actual invasion, the Caucasus would be their most important though doubtless not their sole base of operations.

Forty years ago, when the English entered Afghanistan to meet an expected Russian advance through Khiva; fourteen years ago, when Sir Henry Rawlinson's remarkable article on Russia's progress in the East was published in the *Quarterly Review*; twelve years ago, when Mr. Vambéry's first volume on Central Asia appeared; ten years ago, when Lord Clarendon had his important interview with Prince Gortchakoff at Heidel-

berg ; six years ago, when the Afghan boundary was settled by the Russian and English Governments ; it was held that if Russia ever attempted the invasion of India she would do so by way of Balkh and Cabul, though Vambéry had, indeed, pointed out that although “no one could now doubt that the Eastern question might be more easily solved on the Hindoo Kush than on the Bosphorus, yet the Russians would not necessarily choose the difficult roads through Balkh to Cabul and none other,” the road through Herat and Candahar, the proper caravan course to India, being far more convenient.

In September 1869, however, when the Earl of Clarendon at his interview with Prince Gortchakoff commenced the negotiations which upwards of three years afterwards ended with what at the time was considered a highly satisfactory arrangement in respect to the Afghan boundary, his Lordship thought only of the possibility of an advance through Balkh and Cabul. The Russians, he observed, already in possession of Samarkand, with Bokhara in their power, and constantly advancing in the direction of Afghanistan, might soon be expected in the vicinity of the Hindoo Kush, whence “the British possessions might be viewed as a traveller on the summit of the Simplon might survey the plains of Italy,” so that “measures for our own protection might then become necessary” ; and it is worth remembering that, in the now historical conversation between the two ministers, the English

statesman saw danger where danger is no longer seen—not because it has ceased to exist, but because it has been overshadowed by a greater peril.

Besides the roads through Balkh and Cabul, and through Herat and Candahar, there is a third route of invasion, in which some believe, and which may one day be employed, certainly not in lieu of, but possibly in conjunction with the two others. Mr. Schuyler, while convinced that there is not the slightest desire or incentive to make any attack upon India, adds that the Russians would dislike to see England extend her influence nearer than she now does to Central Asia, and thinks it possible that at some time difficulties may arise with regard to the English policy at Kashgar, while the late Lieutenant Hayward was convinced that from Eastern Turkestan India might without much difficulty be invaded. “An army,” he wrote, “attempting a passage across the mountains from Eastern Turkestan to India would have no great impediment to encounter until it had entered the deeper defiles of the Lower Himalayas. The portion of the line intervening between the crest of the Karakorum range and the plains of Turkestan is quite practicable, and as in all human probability it is here that the Russian and Indian empires will first come into contact, and the frontiers run conterminous, this fact is deserving of especial consideration.”

Nevertheless, the advance by way of Samarkand, the

approach by way of Balkh and Cabul was the line of menace or invasion generally accepted, at least until some time after the last Khivan expedition; when newly observed intentions on the part of Russia changed the aspect of affairs. Mr. MacGahan, believing, like everyone else, that the Russians had no immediate designs on India, admitted that whether they followed a traditional policy of aggression or not, the result would be very much the same. "They are steadily advancing towards India," wrote the observant American in his interesting account of the Khivan expedition, "and they will sooner or later acquire a position in Central Asia which will enable them to threaten it. Should England be engaged in a European war, and not show herself sufficiently accommodating on the Bosphorus, then, indeed, Russia would probably strike a blow at England's eastern empire." Mr. MacGahan did not think that the Russians could do much in that way at present, but pointed out that when a railroad had been laid from Samara to Samarkand, the question would assume a very different aspect. "Suppose stores to have been collected at Samarkand in advance, an army one hundred thousand strong might," he wrote, "by means of a railroad be concentrated in Kerki. From Kerki to Kunduz, along the valley of the Oxus, is only two hundred and fifty miles, and an army might make this distance easily in twenty days. The annexation of Bokhara and occupation of Kerki would

therefore be the next step in the advance of the Russians on India. Bokhara is at present completely under the Russian tutelage, and I believe no existing agreements between them and the Russian Government prevent them from occupying that country; and Bokhara occupied, the Russian frontier would be within one hundred and fifty miles of Cabul."

It was not, indeed, until after the occupation of Khiva had become an accomplished fact, and therefore not worth protesting against—as previously it had been disavowed as a project and was equally therefore not worth protesting against—that the notion of Russia's advance towards India by way of Merv and Herat came to be entertained as it now seems to be, to the exclusion of all other routes. No mention of Merv in connection with Russia is to be found in any book or article published prior to the year 1874. Merv derived a great part of the importance now attached to it from incidents which occurred during the Khivan expedition, or rather immediately after the capture of the city of Khiva. Mr. MacGahan has told us of the wanton and cruel attack made by General Golovatchoff on the Khivan Turkomans. He saw it, rode with the troopers who executed it, has graphically described it, and says plainly that he could not understand it. General Kauffman had insisted on immediate payment of a tribute, which the Yomud Turkomans agreed to yield but were notoriously unable to collect without some short notice.

General Kauffman was severely criticised, as MacGahan writes, by his own officers for adopting this course. "He knew very well," they said, "it was not possible for the Turkomans to pay in the specified time ; he had allowed himself to be hoodwinked by the Khan, and was becoming a mere tool in his hands for the furtherance of his schemes of conquest over the Turkomans." The conduct of the General was much blamed in the Russian newspapers. But probably the worst thing said of it came from General Kryzhanoffsky, Governor-General of Orenburg, who, in explaining the measure to Mr. Schuyler, remarked that it was necessary to have some actions in which the Taschkend expedition could distinguish itself and receive its share of honours and rewards, the glory of the affair having been so far to the Orenburg and Caucasus expeditions alone. Accordingly General Golovatchoff, sent out by General Kauffman to ascertain the probability of payment, entered upon a solution of the problem by attacking the Turcoman villages and encampments, burning the houses, destroying the waggons of household stores, and spreading devastation generally among them.

Medals, then, in the Russian army, are, according to General Kryzhanoffsky, a direct encouragement to wilful murder. I do not, however, mention Golovatchoff's raid among the Turkoman families merely to condemn it, but in order to inquire into its true origin. It may have been dictated by other not more humane

but less paltry motives than those assigned by General Kryzhanoffsky. The Orenburg column was on such bad terms with the less successful column from Taschkend that the Turkomans, immediately after General Golovatchoff's incursions amongst them, said to the Orenburg troops that "if they were not so friendly with General Kauffman, now would be just the time to fall together upon General Golovatchoff's expedition and utterly annihilate it." It is possible, then, considering the jealousy between Orenburg and Taschkend, that General Kryzhanoffsky may have been merely uttering a bitter jest when he said that General Golovatchoff had made an onslaught on a host of unoffending men, women and children, for the sake of "glory," and in the hope of obtaining honour and rewards. Consciously or unconsciously, he seems to have indicated the true motive of the attack when he afterwards told Mr. Schuyler that it would certainly lead to serious results. "It will now be necessary," he observed, "to have expeditions against the Turkomans for many years. It will be a second Caucasus, and in the end we shall find ourselves obliged to take Merv, which will undoubtedly lead to complications with England."

"Complications with England" represent, in this case, those drawbacks which, great or small, almost every advantage carries with it. Every step of importance made by Russia in Central Asia has involved "complications with England," from which, however, by means

of explanations and assurances, Russia has had no trouble in freeing herself; and it is certainly more credible that the deliberate destruction of so many Turkoman households may have been effected because "no peace with the Turkomans" was the political order of the day, than because General Kauffman wished to obtain from them an obviously impossible payment, or because General Golovatchoff was eager for a new decoration. The Turkomans attacked with such apparent wantonness by General Golovatchoff were, it is true, Turkomans of the Yomud tribe, whereas the Turkomans around Merv are of the Tekke tribe. General Kauffman, however, told Mr. MacGahan that the Yomud Turkomans, after the destruction of their property by the Russians, sent an embassy to the Tekke Turkomans asking permission to emigrate to their territory. Few of them, according to Mr. MacGahan did really emigrate. But General Kryzhanoffsky was evidently convinced that Tekkes and Yomuds would make common cause; and it is he who is responsible for the statement that General Golovatchoff's ruthless descent upon the latter would lead to serious results, that the Russians would find it necessary to make expeditions against the Turkomans for many years, and that they would in the end find themselves obliged to take Merv, "which would undoubtedly lead to complications with England." If the Russians propose to take possession of Merv, it matters little whether they

do so from the force of circumstances, or in the execution of a design. We have seen what the circumstances were which are now to impel the Russians towards Merv, and it has been already stated that no English publication anterior to the year 1874 speaks of Merv in connection with Central Asian politics. In the correspondence, however, respecting Central Asia, presented to Parliament in 1873, a despatch will be found from Mr. Ronald Thomson, at Teheran, to the Earl of Clarendon, dated November 14th, 1869, in which it is suggested that as the Russians will find it very difficult to establish communications across the desert from the Caspian Sea to the Oxus, they would probably in the end abandon that idea and seek a more practicable route along the Attrek, "following the course of that river eastward, and then skirting along the hills of the north of Bojnoord and Kochan in the direction of Merv, which is not more than four marches from the Oxus, and within ten easy stages of Herat." The only notice which seems to have been taken, at the time, of Mr. Ronald Thomson's surmise is to be found in a letter from Mr. Alison to the Earl of Clarendon, in which it is set forth that "the formation of a route along the Attrek river would afford matter for serious consideration to Persia." Of Merv and its proximity to Herat, of Herat and its importance in connection with India, not a word is said.

Strange as it may at first seem, the question of Merv

as part of the great Central Asian question was first introduced by Prince Gortchakoff, who, on the 4th of May 1870, spoke to Sir Andrew Buchanan of a report which had reached him from Persia, attributing great activity to Shir Ali Khan, who was said to be "endeavouring to induce the Tekke Turcomans, a tribe occupying lands to the south of Khiva to acknowledge his sovereignty." As no sovereignty was claimed for the Amir of Afghanistan over the Tekke Turkomans—which would have amounted to including Merv within the Afghan territory—the matter dropped; but on September 21st of the same year, Mr. Stremooukoff, director of the Asiatic department in the Russian Foreign Office, remarked, in discussing the interminable question of the Afghan frontier, that probably no objection would be made to include Khoja Sali, the last Afghan post westward on the Oxus, within it, but that great care would be required in tracing a line from thence to the south, as Merv and the country of the Turkomans were becoming "commercially important." What changes were just then taking place around or in connection with Merv, so as to render the place "commercially important" was not explained. A place, however, may be commercially important and strategically very important indeed; and Mr. Stremooukoff was probably guilty of no inaccuracy in describing Merv, which commands roads in every direction, and is frequently traversed by caravans, as "commercially

important.” In any case, Sir Andrew Buchanan was struck by the observation, and nearly a year after it had been made, on the 13th of June 1871, reminded Lord Granville of it in one of many letters on the subject of the Afghan boundary.

Merv, not belonging to Afghanistan, was naturally not included within the Afghan frontier. But it seems remarkable, if so much was to be said about it afterwards, that not a word was uttered on the subject—at least not by England—when the Afghan frontier was being traced. Merv is nearly on the same parallel as Khoja Sali, the most western point of Afghan territory on the Oxus; so that if “care had not been taken,” as Mr. Stremooukoff suggested, in drawing the line—if, for example, it had been drawn due west—Russia, by excluding herself from all interference in the affairs of Afghanistan, would have been definitely shut out from Merv. She expressly stipulated that this should not be the case, having previously given the English Government to understand, in the same order of ideas, that if the Amir of Afghanistan claimed to exercise sovereignty over the Tekke Turkomans, a tribe occupying land to the south of Khiva, his pretensions could not be recognized.

In insisting on the fact that the Afghans had nothing to do with Merv, nor the Turkomans of Merv with Afghanistan, the Russian Government gave no hint of any intention to occupy the place on their own ac-

count. But Prince Gortchakoff has declared so often and so pointedly that Afghanistan would be considered as "entirely beyond the sphere in which Russia might be called upon to exercise her influence," that it is difficult not to see in the constant reiteration of this phrase a meaning not contained in the phrase itself. "No intervention or interference whatever opposed to the independence of that State enters into His Imperial Majesty's intentions," added Prince Gortchakoff when, in response to Earl Clarendon's suggestion of a neutral territory between the English and Russian empires in the East, he for the first time assured Her Majesty's Government, through the usual channels, that Afghanistan should certainly be left alone.

"Afghanistan" has since been accepted by both Governments as comprising besides Afghanistan proper, which was all Prince Gortchakoff originally included beneath that name, certain dependencies south of the Oxus regarded at one time by Prince Gortchakoff as belonging to Bokhara, by the British Embassy of St. Petersburg as belonging to Khiva, but which the Indian Government showed to be feudatory States under Afghan sovereignty. The negotiations on this subject are known to have lasted something like four years; and nearly five years after they were first begun, on the 21st of January 1874, Prince Gortchakoff repeated to Lord Loftus the positive assurance that the Imperial Cabinet continued to consider Afghanistan

as "entirely beyond its sphere of action." This was in answer to a despatch calling Prince Gortchakoff's attention to the injurious effects that might be expected from the expedition which the Russians were preparing to send against the Turkomans of the region around Merv and to Merv itself; as to which point Prince Gortchakoff contented himself with observing that "Russia had no intention of undertaking an expedition against the Turkomans," though he at the same time let it be understood that this intention might be departed from if these turbulent tribes were to take to "attacking or plundering us."

According to Mr. Schuyler (Diplomatic Report to the United States Government) "the arrangements made with England in regard to the boundary of Afghanistan simply meant that if Russia came up to the Oxus nothing would be said," though Mr. Schuyler was convinced (and he thought the same would be evident to any one who understood well the position of affairs in Central Asia), that the Russians would "eventually occupy the whole country as far as the Oxus and possibly as far as the Hindoo Kush." In this latter case we should, of course, be allowed to exercise our ancient right of remonstrance, to which, as long as the Russians do not go south of the Upper Oxus, we are not entitled to have recourse. In other words, Mr. Schuyler holds that Russia does not consider herself bound to respect the Afghan frontier as defined by Russia and England

conjointly, but that having ascertained how far she can proceed without giving cause for complaint she will advance to the extreme limit as a matter of course, and at a fitting opportunity go a step further. He cites no particular authority, but refers in support of his opinion to "any one who understands well the position of affairs in Central Asia."

Prince Gortchakoff's emphatic declaration in respect to the inviolability of Afghan territory does not according to the ordinary meaning, not even according to the ordinary diplomatic meaning of words, bear the interpretation which Mr Schuyler would put upon it. But the Prince does really appear to lay too much stress on Russia's firm intentions to respect Afghan rights. This must already have occurred to many when, in a note to the second edition of Sir Henry Rawlinson's *England and Russia in the East*, it was set forth that Russia complained of our interposition on behalf of the Turkomans of Merv, as "opposed to the principle of geographical limitation which governs our mutual relations in Central Asia. She considers, in fact, that her own abstention from interference within the limits of Afghanistan requires a similar abstention on our part beyond those limits; "and as far as the Afghans and Uzbegs are concerned," adds Sir Henry Rawlinson, "such a reciprocity of obligation would seem to be only fair and reasonable. But Merv is independent territory belonging neither to the Af-

ghans nor Uzbeks, and in the absence of any special arrangement with Russia to that effect, there is really no argument against our communicating with the Turkomans or taking an interest in their welfare, that would not apply equally to our diplomatic relations with Kashgar or even with Persia."

Meanwhile it is quite clear that the settlement of the Afghan boundary effected, to the great apparent delight of both Governments, in January 1873, some two or three months before the departure of the expedition or expeditions to Khiva, was no settlement of the general question as to how far Russia might advance in Central Asia without giving cause for complaint to England. All Russia pledged herself to do, when, after many objections, she at length accepted the Afghan boundary as traced by the Indian Government, was in no way to interfere with the affairs of Afghanistan; and she had already taken particular care to point out, from three to four years before any question in connection with Merv had arisen to occupy the attention of the English Government, that the affairs of the Tekke Turkomans and of Merv were not those of Afghanistan at all.

It would be useless to consider the Russian arguments on this subject, though it is easy to imagine what they must be, and also by what counter arguments they may well be met on the part of our own Government. Several insoluble but none the less interesting questions have already been discussed between

Russia and England—as, for instance, whether Orientals are more amenable to sentiments of gratitude or of fear? In its abstract form such a question seems as impossible to decide as those on more tender subjects, supposed to have been discussed in the days of the troubadours by courts of love. If the Governments of Russia and England begin to dispute, or are already disputing as to whether what is not included in a proposition is necessarily excluded from it, the arguments on the subject of Merv may last some considerable time. It is certain, however, that in drawing the Afghan boundary some fifty miles south of Merv, the English Government did not intend to place Merv at the disposition of Russia; while it is by no means certain that in conceding to England the frontier she demanded on behalf of the Amir of Afghanistan, Russia did not mean to imply that she could not recognize England's right to interfere with the action of Russia in any part of Central Asia outside Afghanistan. No official correspondence respecting Central Asia has recently been published. Russia has given herself—or, what comes to the same thing, has given Bokhara—a fixed boundary on the Oxus to Khoja Sali, where, while the river still runs to the north, the Afghan boundary hitherto marked by its course suddenly runs to the south.

But it is impossible to say what the Russian boundary is, or what it is intended to be, east of Khoja Sali, nor do the selected Parliamentary papers enable one to guess

whether so much as an "interchange of ideas" (to use one of Prince Gortchakoff's historical expressions) ever took place on the subject. It may safely be assumed, however, that no assurances or explanations were offered to us by Russia on this point further than those given very positively in connection with the occupation of Khiva—which was not to be occupied permanently. At one time it seems to have been thought that the Russians would consent to regard the Oxus to its mouth as their boundary. This was some time before the Khivan expedition, and Prince Gortchakoff at once explained that such a limitation would place Khiva beyond their reach, and embolden the Khan, having no fear of punishment before his eyes, to misbehave himself. Ultimately the frontier was traced only between Afghanistan and Bokhara and along the whole northern line of Afghanistan, so that if Russia is entitled to annex everything in Central Asia which by the Afghan boundary arrangement she is not excluded from annexing, we may look upon the future frontier of Russia in Central Asia as continuous along the whole line with the frontier of Afghanistan. This would round off the Russian possessions between the Caspian and the Oxus very beautifully, and it would of course give Merv to the Russians.

Russia having already in her occupation the east coast of the Caspian, the Attrek river, and the river

Oxus, it is impossible not to believe that she proposes to possess herself of all the territory comprised within these three lines. In an article published in the *Quarterly Review*, which Sir Rutherford Alcock, writing in the *Fortnightly Review*, attributed to Sir Bartle Frere, it is maintained that "if Merv is not a Russian garrison, if her outposts are not entrenched on the Attrek, it is simply because Russia believes such occupation would bring matters to an undesirable crisis with England, and not from any strategical difficulty in the necessary movements on the part of Russia. Both positions can be easily occupied whenever the Tzar wills it, and the Russian outposts will then be conterminous with the Afghan and Persian frontiers." According, however, to General Kryzhanoffsky, the occupation of Merv would be no such easy matter. He sees in the Turkoman country "a second Caucasus," and without disregarding the political obstacle which Sir Bartle Frere deems so formidable, looks upon it not as a primary but as a secondary one. Admit, however, that the Tekke Turkomans will be found as dangerous opponents as were formerly Schamyl's mountaineers: the Caucasus was pacified in the end, and some day the Turkoman country will, in its turn, be subjected. Before that object is attained, it is probable that a great many despatches will be exchanged between the English and Russian Governments, which will have as much effect as was produced by the despatches presented to the

Russian Foreign Office on the subject of the establishment of a Russian "factory" at Krusnovodsk, the occupation of Samarkand, and the expedition to Khiva. The line of argument proper to each side is already known, but how an agreement can possibly be arrived at by the disputants is not known.

Only a very sanguine person, however, can believe that any amount of letter-writing will have the effect of making Russia abandon her intention of seizing Merv. All that the English Government (as far as can be learnt from the published correspondence) has said on the subject is, that the occupation of Merv by Russia, and the pursuit of the Tekke Turkomans by Russian troops, might cause the warriors to take refuge in Afghanistan, to the serious inconvenience of the Amir, and indirectly of the Indian Government. Both Lord Granville, moreover, and Lord Derby, have declared—the former in a despatch to the English ambassador at St. Petersburg, the latter in a speech delivered in the House of Lords—that the independence of Afghanistan must at all hazards be maintained. There is nothing provocative or in the slightest degree defiant in these declarations, which, as we have seen, have been anticipated again and again by Prince Gortchakoff. Indeed, his excellency has stated so often that he considers Afghanistan "entirely beyond the sphere of Russian influence or interference," that it seems somewhat superfluous to address to Russia any warnings

on that subject. Our Government speaks "with no uncertain sound," on a point concerning which there is no possibility of a misunderstanding, and, as a matter of fact, absolute agreement. About Merv, however, the sound is very uncertain indeed. In connection with Merv, neither do the English say that it must not be attacked, nor the Russians that they will not attack it. The English Government confines itself to hoping that the Russians will leave it alone, while the Russian Government fears that the bad conduct of the Tekke Turkomans may, perhaps, not allow it to do so.

Even Sir Henry Rawlinson is not quite sure that the occupation of Merv would give us grounds for interference—and, if not for interference, why for vain protest? "Without," he has written, "making any offensive notification to Russia about the limitation of her advance, and reserving to ourselves the right in the interest of the Afghans to impede her occupation of Merv, if it seems advisable, I submit that we should at any rate make up our minds that she shall not follow up the Murghab valley from Merv into the Afghan territory unopposed."

This looks very like a surrender of Merv to the Russians, under cover of a caution that if they do take Merv, they had better, at all events, leave Afghanistan alone. But according to the declaration of the Russian Foreign Office, made explicitly, and emphatically repeated again and again, put on record in every

shape, and supported by a formal agreement, which was not signed until every point contained in it had been thoroughly discussed, the Russians will under no circumstances enter, or in any way interfere with, Afghanistan. Not to expose Herat to the possibility of a Russian surprise, Sir Henry Rawlinson would garrison it with English troops, always supposing that the Amir, besides accepting arms, money, and our services in securing to him his legitimate frontier, would permit us to offer him personal assistance. No one can say that with the Russians at Merv, he would not consent to such an arrangement, whatever objections he might feel to admitting English troops within his dominions.

Sir Henry Rawlinson, then, who is more alive to the danger of the Russian advance than any other writer of high authority on the subject, and almost the only one who ever proposed to meet it by specific means, would look upon the further extension of the Russian frontier to the borders of Afghanistan, so that Afghans and Russians should face one another along the whole line of the Afghan frontier, as a step which would call for the garrisoning of Herat by an English force, and nothing more. This might be either the solution of a difficulty or the prelude to a conflict. But the question of peace or war would obviously rest with the Russians themselves, and if they adhered to their present determination in no way to

interfere with the affairs of Afghanistan, no inconvenience need arise from the proximity of English to Russian troops. The author of the article, already referred to, in the *Quarterly Review*, ends like Sir Henry Rawlinson, but with fewer reservations and more complacency, by giving up to Russia the whole of what is called "Central Asia" up to the boundaries of Afghanistan proper. "It is more than possible," he writes, "that if Russia were satisfied that we had no jealousy of her attempts to dominate and civilize the countries east of the Caspian, as far south as the Attrek and the Oxus, she would be only too glad to know that we considered that frontier as fixed as our own, as in eastern Europe, and to find her officers as her frontier neighbours, prepared to use the vast moral influence at our command to insure to her reasonable satisfaction in the event of just cause of offence being given by the tribes and powers to the south of the border." This is really Sir Henry Rawlinson's conclusion put in a conciliatory and complimentary form. It is, indeed, "more than probable" that if we could reconcile ourselves to seeing the Russian power established all along the Afghan frontier, and continuously along the line of the Attrek, the Russians would on their side see nothing to object to in the presence of English officers in Afghanistan. In fact, Prince Gortchakoff volunteered on one occasion the statement that there could be no objection to the pre-

sence of English officers in Afghanistan, though the important question of numbers and organization was not touched upon.

English writers on the Central Asian question may in the present day be divided into those who would abandon to Russia all Central Asia up to the Afghan frontier, but at the same time would seek to place an English garrison at Herat, and those who would abandon Central Asia to Russia absolutely. These latter believe that Russia has a great civilizing mission to perform in Central Asia; which is doubtless true. They also maintain that the Russians in advancing towards Afghanistan have no designs, direct or indirect, upon India; which is demonstrably false. The writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, whose line of argument Sir Henry Rawlinson denounces in the preface to his second edition as "unpatriotic in principle, unsound in theory, and untrue in practice," asserts that no one in India sees any danger in the Russian advance, except those who have served on the north-western frontier. It is precisely, however, on the north-west frontier of India that one would expect officers to be most alive to the importance of the Russian approach. The Indian Government, too, is supposed to be more impressed by its significance than the Home Government, though we have seen at least one Foreign Minister, the late Lord Clarendon, did not like the idea of the Russians making their way to the Hindoo Kush. Travellers in Central

Asia are, perhaps, more suspicious authorities than even officers who have served on the north-west frontier of India. But without laying any further stress on the writings of Mr. Vambéry (whose predictions, however, made from twelve to fourteen years ago, have hitherto been gradually receiving verification), both Mr. Schuyler and Mr. MacGahan were persuaded, not, indeed, that Russia purposed invading India with a view to its conquest—which 'no one, not even Mr. Vambéry, believes—but that she meant to advance as far as possible towards our Indian frontier, where her very presence, whatever her intentions might be, would be a threat. This, indeed, was sufficiently shown towards the end of the Russo-Turkish war, when a small Russian expedition was actually despatched towards Afghanistan: to be recalled after the signing of the treaty of Berlin.

Mr. Schuyler thinks the arrangement on the subject of the Afghan boundary will be disregarded, and that the Russians will advance as far as the Hindoo Kush. Mr. MacGahan tells us that they see a certain amount of territory lying between the English and Russian possessions which must sooner or later fall into the hands of one of these powers. "I think," he adds, "they are disposed to seize as much of this territory as they conveniently can, and this comprises their whole policy at present." Mr. Schuyler, moreover, has informed us that in the opinion of General Kryz-

hanoffsky, the Russians were pursuing a course which "would undoubtedly lead to complications with England." This was an Orenburg opinion. As to the Russian officers of General Kaufmann's expedition from Tashkend, they "looked upon the English, if not with liking, at least with a good deal of respect, but none the less anticipated a time when the collision of Russian and English interests might bring Russian and English armies into conflict." Already the position of the Russians in Central Asia is such a menace to India, that if we were again at war with Russia, instead of receiving troops from India, as happened in the Crimea, we should by some means or other have to strengthen our Indian garrisons. Russia, on the other hand, would have plenty of troops on the spot, with the army of the Caucasus at no great distance to draw upon for supports.

Although it is a favourite theory that every advance of the Russians in Central Asia is due to the force of circumstances, and not to well-planned design, two Russian officers, Captain Kuropatkin and Captain Kostenko, went, some half-dozen years ago, to Algeria for the purpose of studying, according to the *Russian Invalid*, the local method of training indigenous troops under French officers. No reason can be assigned why the Russians should not profit by every move open to them in the game of politics; and when they have conquered the Turkomans they will have every right to

form them into squadrons of irregular cavalry under Russian leadership. But this will be no more due, than have been the reconnoitring expeditions already sent in the direction of Merv, to the force of events. In case, too, of war with England, the Russians would have an invaluable ally in the former rival for, and actual pretender to, the throne of Cabul, Abdul Rahman Khan, of whom mention is made several times in the correspondence presented to Parliament on the subject of the Afghan frontier. Without apparently troubling himself about the English, this enterprising chief has long been anxious to lead an expedition into Afghanistan on his own account.

Possibly he shares the delusions common to so many refugees, and enjoys less influence than he imagines in the country which he still regards as his own. General Kauffman has warned him against entertaining dangerous schemes, and has declared again and again that Abdul Rahman Khan is only allowed to remain at Samarkand by reason of his unfortunate position, and not in recognition of his claim to the Afghan throne. It appears, however, from a report on Central Asia, addressed by Mr. Schuyler to the American Government, that the dispossessed Amir receives a pension of twenty-five thousand roubles from the Russian Government, and is counted in the Russian service. "Some years ago," writes Mr. Schuyler (1874), "he petitioned General Kauffman to grant him one hundred

thousand roubles, saying that with that he would be able to reassert his right to the throne and put down Shir Ali, but this request was refused. As Abdul Rahman lives very economically, he will soon be able to have the money required from his savings. He is in constant correspondence with Afghanistan, and professes to think that on his reappearance there, there will at once be a revolution in his favour."

The Russian means, then, of "influencing" Afghanistan are simple enough. Hitherto the direct relations between Russia and Afghanistan have been very few, and, until the armed mission of 1878, had been chiefly confined to the interchange of letters of politeness. With much delicacy the Russians, as Mr. Schuyler thinks, make a point of sending with their letters an English translation of the same, for the greater convenience of the Indian authorities, to whom it is presumed they are transmitted.

England also has her Afghan refugee, described by Sir H. Rawlinson as a "young man of considerable abilities and force of character, who may yet play a not unimportant part in the arena of Afghan politics." Iskander Khan, the chief in question, son of Sultan Ahmed Khan of Herat, took part in an insurrection or civil war waged against Shir Ali, his uncle, and, soon after the restoration of peace, passed from Afghanistan to Bokhara, and ultimately from Bokhara to Russian Turkestan, where he entered the Russian service. At the battle

of Samarkand, he commanded a contingent of Afghans nearly three hundred strong. Afterwards he was sent to St. Petersburg, when he received a lieutenant-colonel's commission, and served for some time with the Hussars of the guard. Several years later, when he proposed to return home, he was recommended to take the route of Central Asia ; but he preferred to visit England, where he remained some seven or eight years, until recent events induced him to visit first Turkey and afterwards Persia. A perfect master of Russian and English, as of other languages, and acquainted with the arms, tactics, and organization of European armies, he might render important service to his own country by establishing a regular military force on something like the European model.

Iskander Khan's knowledge of Afghan affairs, of the relations between Afghanistan and Bokhara, and between Bokhara and Russia, might be of some use to our Indian Government ; but his rich relative, Abdul Rahman, who is resolved some day to strike a blow for the Afghan crown, and who has long been saving up his money for that purpose, would, in the event of hostilities between England and Russia, prove a powerful weapon of offence in Russia's hands.

CHAPTER XII.

RUSSIAN EXPEDITIONS TOWARDS INDIA.

UNTIL quite lately it was an understood thing that an Englishman who believed seriously in what were vaguely called "Russian designs upon India," was a fit subject, if not for medical, at least for severely satirical treatment. His mania was of too harmless a character to require his confinement in a lunatic asylum. But his eccentric views entitled him to a place in comedy ; and among the political oddities of the day, few have been looked upon as more amusing than the man who believed that the Russians aim persistently at threatening, and, if possible, overthrowing, our Indian empire. Fortunately for the Russian Government, those Englishmen who had persuaded themselves that the Russians were gradually approaching our Indian frontiers with a directly hostile purpose, had for

the most part become convinced that the Russians were also pursuing their deep and diabolical designs against England in a great number of other quarters. Russia was supposed to have agents even in the English Cabinet, and the *Diplomatic Review*, the organ of Mr. Urquhart and his followers, saw the hand of Russia in the Ashantee expedition, which "Russian intrigue" had somehow caused our Government to undertake, in order that imports of African palm oil might be diminished and those of Russian tallow proportionately increased. If Mr. Urquhart's character had not been above suspicion, one might, to judge from the result of his teaching, have inferred that he himself was a Russian agent. Discovering signs of Russian activity in all sorts of impossible places, he ended by making many calm matter-of-fact persons believe that stories of "Russian intrigue" were one and all without basis, and that Russia troubled herself no more about the affairs of other nations than her position as a great European and Asiatic power legitimately entitled her to do. People got tired of tales more fantastic than ingenious, as to the Machiavellian, Mephistophelean meddling of Russia in the concerns of her neighbours; and one natural effect of circulating these always highly coloured and often groundless fables, was to produce an impression, which of late years has gone on gradually increasing, to the effect that the action of the Russian Government was habitually misrepresented.

Russia, as a nation, has probably suffered more from misrepresentation than any other country ; and for this the Russians may, in the first place, thank their own Government. Indeed, nearly everything that has been written against Russia has been the work of men who, directly or indirectly, had been forced to leave it ; whereas all the most favourable accounts of Russia, or rather of the Russians, have been written by English, French, and German travellers. In spite of much that is detestable in Russia, one need only refer to the writings of Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Germans, who have visited Russia during the last twelve or fifteen years, to see that foreigners of various countries, of various temperaments, inclinations, and habits of thought, agree with the most remarkable unanimity in forming a better opinion of the Russian than is generally entertained by those who have had no direct experience of them. The discovery that the Russians, without being by any means white, are not at all so black as they are painted, could not but lead to a reaction in their favour ; and to this reaction may, in a great measure, be attributed the belief which seized so many Englishmen two or three years ago, and which clings to some of them even now, that the Russians, though in all previous wars with Turkey they had fought for territory, were about to engage in a costly and sanguinary contest with no other object than that of liberating the Christians of Bulgaria from Turkish oppression. Many

readers of Mr. Mackenzie Wallace, of M. Leroy Beaulieu, and of M. Raimbaud, must have come to the conclusion that they had too long been victims of a sort of mystification on the subject of Russia ; so little does the Russia of these writers resemble the Russia of the Polish emigrants and Russian revolutionists, with the knout and Siberia for sole principles of government, without art, without literature, without even intelligent conversation, except such as might safely be carried on within the hearing of ever-present spies.

It is quite certain that the Russia of reality is a much better country in many respects than the Russia of popular belief. Probably no country inhabited by Europeans can ever have been quite so bad as Russia not many years ago was generally thought to be. Nor could any Government, putting all question of villany on one side, be so far-seeing, so far-reaching, and generally so astute as that Satanic cabinet, which, sitting on the banks of the Neva, was supposed, through a thousand mysterious and almost magical means, to influence Parliamentary divisions, upset ministries, and for the sake of a mere question of customs duties, of a single insignificant article in a tariff, set in blind and antagonistic motion the fleets and armies of her neighbours. The sort of stuff that used to be talked about Russia and Russian affairs, by certain outrageous specimens of the club politician, suggested to Thackeray his anecdote of the Russian lady flogged for indiscreet

language, in her own London residence, by two drummers of the Preobrajenski Regiment, sent for that purpose from St. Petersburg. Retailers of such gossip as this—and the story (in the snob papers) of the Russian lady and the Preobrajenski drummers, was less absurd than others of the same character which were spread abroad in good faith—ended by creating a positive disgust for such tales.

Mr. Urquhart, as he himself informed the world in one of his own journals, used to keep a certain number of spies who were employed to watch Lord Palmerston with the view of ascertaining where he got his money, and what he did with it; and if a number of Englishmen could be made to believe that Lord Palmerston was a hired Russian agent, that England had been dragged into the Crimean war at the dictation of Russia, anxious only to degrade Turkey by making that power dependent on the help of France and England, and that the Ashantee campaign was due to the depressed condition of the Russian tallow trade, then the simple truth as to intrigues actually engaged in by Russia would not be likely to make any deep impression upon them.

It rests on the best evidence that when the English and American Governments were endeavouring to come to an understanding on the "Alabama" question, the Russian Minister at Washington, Mr. Catacazi did his utmost to keep up ill-feeling between the two countries

by seeking to procure the insertion of articles written with that aim in the leading American newspapers. It is well known, moreover, that the President of the United States expressed his opinion of Mr. Catacazi's conduct in very strong terms, that he refused any longer to receive him, and that Mr. Catacazi having failed in the special object of his mission, and being virtually told to quit the country, was recalled by his Government. This really instructive story met with but little attention in England; and the carelessness with which it was listened to may fairly be accounted for by the fact that our public had already had a surfeit of such tales and could no longer trouble itself to distinguish those that were true from those that were false. It sounded so very like one of Mr. Urquhart's stories; and much of what has been written on the subject of Russia's plans and projects against our dominion in India has been similarly dismissed as the fanciful creation of restless, imaginative, and very credulous political speculators.

In connection with the designs which Russia has been accused of entertaining against our Indian empire, speculation, supposition, and inference have indeed played an important part.

The presence of a Russian envoy at Cabul in 1838, could not but suggest interference in our Indian affairs; and the visit of M. Vilkievitch to the Ameer of Afghanistan had a peculiarly suspicious appearance, from

the fact that Count Nesselrode had quite recently assured the English Government that Russia looked upon Afghanistan as (to borrow by anticipation Prince Gortchakoff's phrase) "entirely beyond the sphere of her influence and interference." At that particular crisis, however, there was no question of making war upon England. The Russians wished the Persians to succeed in taking Herat—not apparently for the sake of Persia alone; and to bring about the desired result they were willing to preside over an alliance between Persia and Afghanistan, on the understanding that if the Afghans would help to reduce Herat, they would afterwards help the Afghans to recover the territory which had been recently conquered from them by Runjeet Singh. The terms offered by Vitkievitch to Dost Mahomed, just forty years ago, proved to demonstration that Russia wished to get Herat, if not all at once into her own power, at least into that of her friends.

Russia may have entertained designs of a more direct character against our Indian possessions; and it is certain that the Russians, as one of their own official writers has set forth, "were much troubled at this time by the attempts which were being made by the English to establish commercial intercourse with Bokhara, and to establish their influence not only beyond the Hindoo Kush, but also beyond the Oxus." It can be shown in any case that the Russian advance in Central Asia has always been regarded by the Russians themselves as a

movement hostile both to the commercial and to the political interests of England; and apart from the opinions to this effect expressed by writers so friendly to Russia as Mr. Schuyler and the late Mr. MacGahan, the fact, whatever it may be worth, can be established by reference, not to unauthorized articles in independent Russian newspapers, but to Russian official documents issued in the form of instructions to officers and agents engaged in expeditions against the Central Asian Khanates.

If the name of Peter the Great be mentioned, the alarmed reader will probably fear that that sovereign's too famous will is about to be put in evidence. Let the question of the genuineness of Peter the Great's will rest with that of the authorship of Junius's Letters and of the identity of the Man in the Iron Mask. It is impossible to prove the authenticity of Peter the Great's will, though it is certain that the policy which the document so entitled sets forth has been carried out as faithfully as though the great Tzar had really dictated it under circumstances of the greatest solemnity, and as if with his last breath. It is certain, too, that Peter, whether or not he gave directions on the subject in that formal political testament which several of his contemporaries believed him to have drawn up, aimed, like the Russian Government of the present day, at establishing commercial intercourse with India. Such, according to the Tashkend correspondent of the *Russian*

World, is one of the objects with which General Stoliétoff and his mission recently visited Cabul, and such was the object with which Peter the Great, in 1694, despatched the first of several agents to Hindostan.

When almost every nation in Europe was trading with India, and when England, France, Portugal, Holland, and Denmark had founded companies for carrying on this lucrative commerce, there could be no harm in Russia's following the example of her older and more fortunate rivals. Peter, nevertheless, thought it prudent to send his agents secretly. The route by which he proposed that they should enter India lay, in one case, through Persia, in two others through Khiva and along the Oxus. But the agents were all instructed, in returning from India, to make their way to the Caspian by the nearest route. The envoy of 1694 was a merchant called Simon the Little. No record of the instructions given to Simon "Maliuki" seems to have been preserved. It is known, however, that he reached the court of the Mogul, and on his way back died at Shemakha in the Caucasus. His companions continued their return journey as far as Astrakhan, to which place they seem to have belonged.

Twenty years later, in 1716, the Governing Senate, issuing detailed instructions in execution of an order from Peter the Great respecting an expedition to Khiva, appeared to be entirely without information as to the result of Simon Maliuki's mission. It directed that

“an ukaz shall be issued to the Court of Embassies respecting the drawing up of credentials and letters to the Khans of Khiva and Bokhara and to the Mogul, and directing that the Chancery of the Senate be informed of the purport of the mission from Bokhara, and of the contents of the letter to the Mogul, which was sent with the merchant Simon Maliuki.” It has been said that Maliuki did not return to Moscow, but died at Shemakha in the Caucasus. In the present day Russian writers of authority differ as to whether he ever reached India. In the official *Narrative of the Russian Military Expedition to Khiva, under General Perofski, in 1839*,* it is stated that “Simon Maliuki was despatched to India in 1694, but died on his way thither at Shemakha,” whereas in the official *Narrative of the Russian Military Expedition to Khiva, conducted by Prince Alexander Bekovitch Cherkasski, in 1717*,† the writer sets forth that Simon “died at Shemakha on his way back.” But the received version of the matter is that he penetrated into India; and a Russian journal, in complaining of the want of enterprise shown by the Russian Government in obtaining information as

* Translated from the Russian for the Foreign Department of the Government of India by Robert Michell.

† Translated from the Russian by Robert Michell, Esq., F.R.G.S., F.S.S., and Fellow of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society. India Office, London.

to our true position in India, has recently asserted (in opposition, however, to facts) that since Simon Maliuki's time no agent ever reached India from the Russian side.

The inhabitants of Astrakhan, both Russian and Tartar, had long been in the habit of crossing to the north-eastern extremity of the Caspian Sea and there trading with the Turkomans, when, in the year 1713, a Turkoman of note named Hodja-Nefes came to Astrakhan, saying that he had matter of great importance to disclose to the Russian Emperor. Prince Simonof, a christianised Persian residing at Astrakhan, sent Nefes to St. Petersburg, where, through the medium of Prince Alexander Bekovitch Cherkasski, he was presented to Peter the Great. Nefes's information was to the effect that "in the country bordering the river Amu (Oxus) gold sand was to be found, and that the river, which formerly flowed into the Caspian, and which, through fear of the Russians, had been diverted by the Uzbegs (Khivans) into the Aral lake, might, by destroying the dam, be made to run again in its old channel—a work in which the Russians would be assisted by the Turkomans." Ashur-Bek, the Khivan envoy at the Russian court, supported Nefes in his statement that the Oxus at its source brought down gold, and he suggested to the Tzar the construction of a fort for the accommodation of one thousand men at its ancient mouth on the Caspian.

Some fourteen years before, Peter had received an embassy from the Khan of Khiva, who fearing, according to some accounts, his own rebellious subjects, according to others the hostility of the Khan of Bokhara, proposed to form an alliance with Russia, and even to place himself under the protection of that power. Peter had accepted the allegiance of two successive khans, when in 1713 the arrival of Hodja Nefes at St. Petersburg reminded him of his distant feudatory; and circumstances being in other respects propitious, the wars with Sweden and Turkey having been brought to a satisfactory end, he lost no time in directing his attention to Central Asian affairs. Khiva and Bokhara were insignificant in themselves, possessing neither rich natural products nor well-developed trade. "But," says the historian of the expedition ordered by Peter, "they were of great importance as channels of trade with other Asiatic countries famous of old for the variety and abundance of their natural wealth."

Khiva at this time had often been visited by Russian traders; and its chief commercial town had, at least on one occasion, in 1602, been sacked by Cossacks without ambition and bent only on buccaneering exploits. But Peter the Great was the first Russian who conceived the idea of approaching Khiva with a political object; and full of this thought he despatched Prince Bekovitch Cherkasski with three thousand troops and a

certain proportion of artillery to congratulate a khan, Shirguzy by name, who had just ascended the Khivan throne. In the same year Ashur-Bek was sent on a mission to India, with the view, as he himself put it, of "buying parrots and panthers for the Tzar." This was apparently his own ingenious way of making known that he was charged with a commercial rather than a political mission. For some unexplained reason, however, Ashur-Bek fell into disgrace, was detained for a long time at Astrakhan, and did not make the contemplated journey to India.

Another agent, named Tevkelef, left Astrakhan at the time of Prince Bekovitch's expedition, with instructions to proceed to India; but he was wrecked at Astrabad, captured by the Persians, and kept a prisoner until all idea of penetrating into India had, for the moment, been abandoned.

But Prince Bekovitch Cherkasski, when in the year 1717 he started at the head of an expedition for Khiva, was himself the bearer of instructions by which he was, after establishing himself in Khiva and Bokhara, to send a further expedition towards India. After sending out several exploring parties, the Prince reported to the Tzar that the ancient bed of the Oxus had been discovered, and that the river had formerly emptied itself into the Caspian at the Balkan creek in Krasnovodsk bay. Bekovitch now received, in Peter's own handwriting, the following orders:—

“1. To construct a fort for one thousand men at the former mouth of the Oxus.

“2. To ascend the old bed of the river in the character of ambassador to the Khan of Khiva, and to ascertain whether the mouths opening into the Aral lake can be closed, and, if so, by what means and with what amount of labour.

“3. To examine the ground near the existing dam, and to take measures for erecting a fort there, and for building a town.

“4, 5, and 6. To incline the Khan of Khiva to fidelity and submission, promising him hereditary possession and a guard for his services.”

The seventh clause of the Tzar's order directed Prince Bekovitch to ask the Khan for vessels,—

“and to send a merchant in them to India by the Amu-Daria (Oxus), ordering the same to ascend the river as far as vessels can go, and from thence to proceed to India, remarking the rivers and lakes, and describing the way by land and water, but particularly the waterway to India by lake or river, returning from India the same way; or, should the merchant hear in India of a still better road to the Caspian sea, to come back by that, and to describe it in writing.”

The merchant was to be provided with letters to the Khans of Khiva and Bokhara, and to the Mogul.

Besides the veritable merchant a naval officer, Lieu-

tenant Kojur, with five or more "navigators," was to be sent to India in merchant's attire. "He is to go," ran the instructions on this head,—

"when the Brigadier Prince Cherkasski shall be able to dispense with him, by water, as far up the river as possible (or by others which may fall into it), to India, in the guise of a merchant, the real business being the discovery of a waterway to India.

"2. To inquire secretly about the river, in case progress by water be forbidden.

"3. To return, if possible, by the same route, unless it be ascertained that there is another and more convenient way by water; the waterway, as well as the land route, to be carefully observed and described in writing, and to be mapped.

"4. To notice the merchandise, particularly aromatic herbs (tea?) and other articles, that are exported from India.

"5. To examine into, and to write an account of, all other matters which, though not mentioned here, may concern the interests of the empire."

In a communication from Prince Bekovitch Cherkasski to the Governing Senate demanding money for expenses, it is set forth that "for long errands, one agent will proceed up the Syr-Daria, to inquire into the existence of gold; the other, in the guise of a trader, to journey up the Amu-Daria to India"; and that "for these persons travelling expenses must

be allowed, in order to enable them to reach their destinations and perform their business. The agent proceeding to India," it is added, "must be supplied with such merchandise as is in demand there, no mean quantity, so that suspicion may not attach to him; for as he shall be sent from the person of the monarch, he must appear accordingly."

Prince Bekovitch's daring enterprise was skilfully executed up to a certain point. The expedition had been announced to the Khan as an embassy of a friendly character. "But," says the official historian, "it threatened Khiva with final extinction, and accidental circumstances alone interfered to prevent this result."

Previous to the march of the army from Krasnovodsk bay, Bekovitch lost his wife and two daughters, who were drowned the very day on which he sailed from Astrakhan. "This domestic calamity," says the chronicler of the expedition, "with the difficulties and troubles that beset him on his march, as well as his anxieties respecting the probable fate of the troops committed to his charge, disturbed his mind to such an extent that he was sometimes on the verge of madness"; and it is assumed that he must have been in an enfeebled condition of intellect when, in accordance with a suggestion from the Khan of Khiva, he gave orders to one of his officers, Von Frankenberg by name,

to divide his forces with a view to more convenient quarters.

Deception was wilfully practised on both sides. The messengers sent by Bekovitch in advance with presents to the Khan were detained, but were allowed to inform the Prince by letter that the object of his expedition was well understood. "It is known," they wrote, "that forts have been built on the east coast of the Caspian, and that cavalry has been assembled in Astrakhan; also that Prince Bekovitch is not coming on an embassy, but to make war."

Nevertheless, Bekovitch started from the Caspian by way of Gurieff with four thousand men, of whom no less than three thousand were troops. General Perofski, in 1839, at the head of an army which, counting the men left behind at various points to guard the line of communications, was scarcely larger than that of Prince Bekovitch, took with him ten thousand camels. Bekovitch had but two hundred, the provisions being, for the main part, conveyed in carts, of which there were six hundred drawn by pack-horses.

Bearing in view the difficulty of obtaining pasture and fresh water, Bekovitch was obliged to abandon his original intention of marching from Krasnovodsk along the old bed of the Oxus. By a modification of the plan recommended by Peter, it had been arranged that two columns should advance upon Khiva, one from Gurief, the other from Krasnovodsk. But the

Krasnovodsk column did not start; and early in June the force at Gurief began the campaign unsupported. Fearing least the intense summer heat should burn up the pasture in the steppe, and desiring also to attack Khiva suddenly, before the Khan could collect his troops, Bekovitch hurried on at the rate of twenty-five miles a day for a distance of two hundred miles to the river Emba, where the first halt was made. When the expedition had marched some distance on the other side of the Emba, a certain number of Calmucks and Turkomans left it secretly, and, making their way to Khiva, informed the Khan of what awaited him. Soon afterwards Bekovitch sent an officer at the head of one hundred irregular horsemen "to assure the Khan of his peaceful intentions." Not to be outdone in politeness and duplicity, the Khan of Khiva despatched couriers to Prince Bekovitch, acknowledging the receipt of his friendly message, and offering him as presents a horse, a kaftan, some vegetables, and some fruit. The Prince understood the real object of the mission, and, to conceal from the envoys the numerical weakness of his little army, pretended that the main body was merely the advance-guard.

At last, after some very rapid marching (from the Emba to the Irket hills, a distance of one hundred miles, in five days, five hundred and thirty-three miles of a hilly country in forty-nine days, and sixty-seven miles of slope by forced marches in two days), the

column reached a branch or overflow of the Oxus within one hundred miles of Khiva, and encamped there on the 15th August 1717. In sixty-five days it had traversed nine hundred miles of barren and arid steppe in the hottest season of the year.

The Khan of Khiva was now assembling a numerous army, which, as he reported for the information of the Russians, would number one hundred thousand men, though he, in fact, collected no more than twenty-four thousand. Bekovitch, seeing that he was about to be attacked, took up a position with his rear to the river and his flanks and front protected by the six hundred carts formed into a line of barricades. The Khivans swept down upon the Russians without preliminaries of any kind, and, continuing their onslaught until night, withdrew, when it became dark, to a distance of a mile or so, where they remained drawn up in the form of a crescent until the next morning. Bekovitch meanwhile had dug a trench and raised earthworks round his camp, fortifying the latter with six guns, which formed the whole of his artillery. Early the next morning the attack was renewed, and it was continued for two days in succession, during which ten of Bekovitch's men were killed by the clumsy firelocks of the Khivans, who on their side suffered greatly from the Russian musketry and artillery.

The Khivans now resorted to negotiations, which were opened by a message from the Khan to the effect

that the attack made by his troops had been executed entirely without orders, and that Bekovitch had only to continue his journey to find, on his arrival at Khiva, that he would be received as a friend. The Russian commanders had assembled in council to consider the Khan's proposition, when their troops were suddenly attacked. But the Khan declared once more that his soldiers had acted without orders, and, to prove his sincerity, punished two of his officers, whom he caused to be led in front of the army by a thin string drawn through the nostril of one and the ear of the other. After the performance of this strange ceremony a preliminary treaty was arranged, on which occasion the Khan's representatives kissed the Koran, and Prince Cherkasski the cross. Then Prince Bekovitch offered presents, which were duly received, and the Russian superior officers were entertained at a dinner, which was enlivened by the performance of a Russian military band.

Bekovitch now entertained no suspicion of the Khan's designs. Or, perhaps, as the official historian suggests, he may have wished to disarm the Khan by exhibiting friendly confidence. He directed, in any case, his principal subordinate, Major von Frankenburg, to divide his forces into five distinct parts, and, reducing his own escort to two hundred men, entrusted them, in small groups, to the Uzbeks, that they might be quartered in the town. No sooner had this been

done than the Khivans fell upon the disbanded Russians, and massacred them. About one thousand men are said to have died from fatigue and privations on the steppes. There still remained upwards of three thousand, including attendants, or about two thousand troops. Of these but few escaped alive, and fewer still returned to their country. The Russian chiefs were put to death with circumstances of great cruelty. The heads of Princes Simonof and Ekonomof were stuffed with hay and exposed on a gibbet, while the head of Prince Cherkasski was sent as a precious gift to the Khan of Bokhara, who, however, rejected the present with indignation, and sent it back, asking "whether the Khan of Khiva was a cannibal."

The destruction of Bekovitch's expedition did not cause Peter to abandon his views with regard to Central Asia. On receiving the tragic news he lost no time in ordering that the regiments left on the east coast of the Caspian should be increased to their full strength, so that the forts raised by Bekovitch might be retained as bases for future operations. The Tzar's attention, however, was diverted from Khiva by his preparations for the Persian campaign, and by events in Europe.

Nevertheless, "from the time of John the Terrible," as the official historian of General Perofski's expedition points out, "the Russians have always sought means for opening a channel for their trade through Central

Asia with India, in order to acquire some of that fabulous wealth for which India was always so famous." It was Peter who first took energetic steps in this direction. "But though the great Russian reformer on his death-bed bequeathed to his successor a legacy of vengeance on the Khivans for the barbarous murder of the members of Prince Bekovitch's *mission* (sic), he was at the same time convinced that, as a preliminary for chastising them, it was necessary to effect the complete subjugation of the Kirghiz Kaisak horde which occupied the countries situated between Russia and Khiva." We are further assured that "the successors of Peter the Great, following out his instructions and views, also entertain the idea of establishing themselves in Central Asia, and of thus opening a new road for Russian commerce in the East."

The Empress Catherine, occupied exclusively with the affairs of Turkey and of Poland, had no time to spare for so distant and unprofitable a country as Khiva. But, at the particular request of the Khan, she sent to Khiva, in 1793, her oculist, Blankenagel by name, who, requested to cure the eyes of the Khan's uncle, declared them to be in a hopeless condition. He was informed, however, that he must cure them or pass for a spy; and, finding himself exposed to the alternative of public execution in case of failure, private assassination in the event of success, he resolved to fly, and succeeded in reaching Russia, where he published

an account of his dangerous journey. Dr. Lord, when, in 1838, he visited the Meer of Kunduz for the purpose of curing the eyes of the Meer's brother, and of enabling his travelling companion, Lieutenant Wood of the Bombay Engineers, to make a survey of the Bamian pass, met with a very different reception; though the potentate who sought his aid had, not long before, declared himself the bitter enemy of all Europeans.*

Although Peter the Great sent to India officers who were ordered to appear there in the character and costume of merchants, and although his successors, "following out his instructions and views, entertained also the idea of establishing themselves in Central Asia, and of thus opening a new route for Russian commerce in the East," the first Russian sovereign who thought of sending troops to India with the direct view of injuring England was the Emperor Paul, who, though slightly mad, possessed at least as much political sagacity as (with the exception of Napoleon) any other monarch of his period. Napoleon seemed, for a time, disposed to co-operate in the vast and, as he himself declared at St. Helena, far from impracticable design of the Russian emperor.

* "As to the establishment of friendship with me," wrote the Meer of Kunduz in 1835 to Dr. Gerard at Cabul, "reflect well how, for the dirty world, I can make friendship with the people of another faith. We are neither desirous of your friendship nor of your enmity, nor do we wish for intercourse with any one."

There was, after all, nothing new in the plan of the Emperor Paul, who merely proposed to attempt, without any risk on the part of Russia beyond the possible sacrifice of a few regiments of Cossacks, what, within the memory of many of his contemporaries, Russia's powerful neighbour, Nadir Shah, had really accomplished. He knew, too, that a whole series of Tartar conquerors had passed from Central Asia through Afghanistan into India; and it may have seemed to him quite feasible that an enterprising commander should make his way to Khiva, as Bekovitch had done, and, raising the plunder-loving Turkomans on his way, proceed from Khiva to Bokhara and from Bokhara to India, when the unfortunate English were to be "driven from their settlements on the Indus."

Paul's first idea, however, in connection with the invasion of India, was to advance from Astrabad, apparently by the road through Herat and Candahar; and in a formal communication to Napoleon on the subject he proposed that, with a combined army of seventy thousand men, France and Russia should "chase the English from India, liberate that rich and beautiful country from the English yoke, and open new roads to England's commercial rivals, and especially to France." In a memorandum on the subject, the Emperor Paul considers in the first place "what powers should be invited to take part in this project of a march to India. The French Republic," he writes, "and the Emperor

of Russia must send a combined force of seventy thousand men to the borders of India. But the Emperor of Germany (*i.e.* Austria) must also join, for it would be necessary to have his permission for the French army to pass through his territory and sail down the Danube." "As soon as the plan has been perfectly matured," continues the Imperial projector, as cited by the *St. Petersburg News* (*Vedomosti*)—

"The Emperor Paul will give orders for the assembling at Astrakhan of an army of thirty-five thousand men—twenty-five thousand regular troops of all arms and ten thousand Cossacks. Astrabad will be the headquarters of the combined army. From the Danube to the borders of India the advance will occupy the French army four months, or, avoiding forced marches, five months. The army to be preceded by commissaries, who will establish stations and halting-places where necessary. They will visit, moreover, the khans and great landowners through whose country the army will pass, in order to explain that the armies of two powerful nations have found it necessary to march by a road which is being prepared to India for the purpose of driving away the English from this beautiful country which they have subjected—a country formerly so remarkable for its industry and its wealth, and which it is now proposed to open to all the world, that the inhabitants may profit by the riches and other advantages given

to them by Heaven. The sufferings under which the population of this country groans have inspired France and Russia with the liveliest interest, and the two governments have resolved to unite their forces in order to liberate India from the tyrannical and barbarous yoke of the English. Accordingly the princes and populations of all countries through which the combined armies will pass need fear nothing. On the contrary, it behoves them to help with all their strength and means so benevolent and glorious an undertaking ; the object of this campaign being in all respects as just as was unjust the campaign of Alexander the Great who wished to conquer the whole world. The commissaries are further to set forth that the combined army will not levy contributions, and will pay in ready money, on terms freely agreed to, for all things necessary to its sustenance : that on this point the strictest rules will be enforced. Moreover, that religion, laws, manners, and customs, property, and women will everywhere be respected and protected. With such announcements, with such honest straightforward statements, it is not to be doubted that the khans and other small princes will allow the combined armies to pass without hindrance through their territories. In any case they are too weak and too much divided by dissensions among themselves to make any opposition. The commissaries will hold negotiations with the khans, princes, and private landowners about furnishing provisions, carts,

and kubitkas. They will subscribe conditions, and according to circumstances will require, or themselves deposit, caution-money. Learned and artistic societies must take part in this glorious expedition. Aeronauts and pyrotechnists will be of the highest value; and, to inspire the population with a high idea of France and Russia, it will be arranged, before the army starts from Astrabad, to hold grand fêtes, and perform striking evolutions, in the style of those with which great events and memorable epochs are celebrated at Paris."

On receiving this project, of which the final paragraph at least must have made him smile, Napoleon asked in reply, "How, when the combined army has assembled at Astrabad, will it penetrate to India, across a barren and almost savage country, a distance of three hundred leagues?"

"The country," answered the Emperor Paul, "is not savage; it is not barren. It has long been traversed by open and spacious roads. The soil is like that of Arabia and Libya—not covered with dry sand. Rivers water it at almost every step. There is no want of grass for fodder. Rice grows in abundance, and forms the principal food of the inhabitants."

These statements as to the richness of the country which it was proposed to traverse do not seem to have been due to Paul's imagination alone. They were apparently borrowed from some official report; for

General Khruleff, in recommending fifty-seven years afterwards a similar march against India, says of the road from the Caspian to Herat (in a project referred to further on) that "the grazing land is good" and that "water, rice, barley, and sheep are procurable in plenty."

When the Russo-French alliance came to an end, the project of a Russo-French expedition to India fell naturally to the ground. But Paul did not abandon his idea; and in 1801 he sent General Orloff, Hetman of the Don, with an army composed of Cossacks and horse artillery, from the Don to Orenburg, and from Orenburg towards Khiva, where on his arrival he was to arrange for himself an expedition to India. The plan of the campaign was drawn up, and the reasons for undertaking it set forth in an Imperial rescript which may be found in the appendix to General Mi-liutin's *History of Souvaroff's Campaigns*, published in 1853 and issued some years afterwards in a German translation.

"The English" (said the Emperor Paul in his rescript) "are preparing to attack me and my allies, the Swedes and Danes, by sea and by land. I am ready to receive them. But it is necessary to attack them themselves where the blow will be most felt and where it is least expected. You will proceed to India. From Orenburg three months, from your own part of Russia another

month—altogether four months. I entrust this expedition entirely to you and your army. Collect your troops in the furthestmost stations, and await orders to march to Orenburg, where again expect orders to continue your march. This enterprise will cover you all with glory, and according to your deserts you will earn my special goodwill. You will acquire riches and treasures, and will affright the enemy in his heart. I send you maps—as many as I have—and remain your well-wisher, PAUL.

“P.S.—My maps only go as far as Khiva and the river Amoor. Beyond these points it is your affair to gain information about the possessions of the English and the condition of the Indian populations subject to their rule.”

In another letter of the same date, Orloff receives from the Emperor the following instructions:—“India, your destination, is governed by one chief ruler and a great many small ones. The English have in this country commercial establishments, which they acquired either with money or by arms. Our object is to destroy all these, to raise up the small rulers, and bring the land into the same dependence on Russia in which it now stands towards England.”

In another letter, not, like the two former ones, in Paul's own writing, Orloff is told, in the name of his “well-wisher Paul,” that his despatch of the 25th

of January has been received, and that its contents are approved, and require, therefore, no comment. Then in his own hand the Tzar continues, under date of February 21: "Take as many men as you can. As to infantry, I am of your opinion, that you had better do without it."

Orloff started from Orenburg in winter with twenty-two thousand Cossacks and forty-four thousand horses and two companies of horse artillery, and in not quite a month made six hundred and eighty-five versts—upwards of four hundred and fifty miles. He had just reached the heights of Irgiz, to the north of the Aral lake, when, Paul's life having been brought to an untimely end, he received an order informing him of the accession of Alexander the First, and commanding him, on the part of the new emperor, to abandon his enterprise.*

Since the days of Paul, who, it has been seen, formed two different projects for attacking our Indian possessions, one by way of Persia, the other by way of Khiva and Bokhara, every Russian emperor has formed plans either for invading India or for damaging our position in that country. Alexander I., during his brief alliance with Napoleon, agreed to take part in a combined Franco-Russian expedition which was to enter

* See *Remarkable Fortunes of Private Individuals in Russia*. By E. P. Karnovitch. St. Petersburg, 1874.

India through Persia and Afghanistan—substantially a repetition of the first of Paul's two projects. The Emperor Nicholas in 1837 sent an agent, Lieutenant Vitkievitch, to the Ameer of Cabul, with an offer of support in arms and money against our ally Runjeet Singh; and the Emperor Alexander II., in 1878, sent General Stoliétoff to Cabul, in order, as the Tashkend correspondent of the *Russian World* has put it, "to establish direct commercial relations with Afghanistan and with India." Both Paul and Alexander had proposed to invade India with Russian troops. Nicholas confined himself to inciting the Afghans against us by offers of material assistance. No one, it must be added, knows what the interference of Alexander II. in Afghanistan would, if persisted in, have really amounted to.

After the peace of 1815, European complications being at an end, the attention of the Russian Government was once more given to Central Asian affairs. Captain Mouravieff went on a mission to Khiva in 1820; and between 1820 and 1830 expeditionary forces were sent into the steppes, and caravans under military escort were despatched to Bokhara.

What Captain Mouravieff wrote on the subject of Khiva after his return is much more remarkable than what he accomplished in Khiva itself; and those who believe that, in attacking Khiva, Russia has never had any idea beyond that of extending her possessions in

Central Asia, may be recommended to read the following extract from the work published by Captain Mouravieff in 1822 :—

“ In a word ” (he says), “ Khiva is at this moment an advanced post which impedes our commerce with Bokhara and Northern India. Under our dependence Khiva would have become a safeguard for this commerce against the attacks of populations dispersed in the steppes of Southern Asia. This oasis, situated in the midst of an ocean of sand, would have become a point of assembly for all the commerce of Asia, and would have shaken to the centre of India the enormous superiority of the rulers of the sea.”

In 1830, the Khivans being at war with Persia, there was some thought of making an attack upon the Khivan capital. But all ideas of this kind were, for a time, put an end to by the insurrection in Poland.

Meanwhile some hundreds of kidnapped Russians were being detained at Khiva. Moreover, since 1824, says the official historian of Perofski's expedition in 1837—

“ A succession of English agents, regardless of all obstacles, had penetrated into Central Asia, and even, in some cases, had returned through Russia. At first, many Englishmen, under motives ostensibly evangelical, settled in the town of Orenburg ; but when it was perceived that these missionaries turned their attention

to other matters, they were requested to leave. Losing all hope of extending their influence in Central Asia from the side of Russia, the English commenced penetrating thither principally from India and through Persia. Thus from 1824 Central Asia had been visited by Moorcroft, Conolly, Wolf, Burnes, and Strange, as later by Burnes, near the time of the Russian Khiva expedition or during that very period. . . . The Russians had reliable information that the agents of the East India Company were continually appearing either at Khiva or Bokhara; they were also aware that this enterprising company, having enormous means at its command, was endeavouring not only to establish its commercial influence throughout the whole of Asia, but was also desirous of extending the limits of its Asiatic possessions. . . . It was only necessary to allow the possibility of the English supplying the Khivans and Turkomans, the nearest and most hostile neighbours of Russia, and likewise the Khirgizes, with arms and ammunition, in order to become convinced of the necessity of counteracting the schemes of England, whose agents did not even try to conceal their hopes, in their published accounts, of becoming masters not only of the whole trade between the river Indus and the Hindoo-Kush, but likewise of the market of Bokhara, the most important in Central Asia."

It was decided, then, with the view of watching the English agents and counteracting their efforts, to send

Russian agents into Central Asia; and in 1835 Lieutenant Vitkievitch, who had acquired a knowledge of the Persian and Tartar languages, was despatched to the country of the Khirgizes, whence he found his way accidentally to Bokhara. After remaining at Bokhara several months he returned to Orenburg; and his reports gave so much satisfaction that it was determined to send him to Persia, where, in 1837, he received orders from Count Simonitch, the Russian ambassador at Teheran, to proceed, carrying with him rich presents and an autograph letter from the Emperor Nicholas, on a mission to Dost Mahomed, Ameer of Cabul.

According to a Russian official report on the subject, dated September 30 (October 12), 1837, the intelligence received at Teheran of the arrival of Burnes at Cabul had "compelled Count Simonitch to send Vitkievitch immediately thither"; and this may be perfectly true. But before Burnes's arrival at Cabul, at the beginning of September 1837, Count Simonitch had written to Dost Mahomed expressing a wish to befriend him; and in forwarding to the Secretary of the Indian Government a copy of the count's letter, Burnes pointed out that the Russian ambassador "had himself commenced the correspondence with the chief of Cabul, telling him that if the Shah of Persia would not assist him, his court was ready to do so."*

* *Correspondence relating to Cabul and Afghanistan*, ordered to be printed June 8, 1859, p. 58.

Dost Mahomed's agent at Teheran, in transmitting the ambassador's letter, had written as follows :—

“The Russian ambassador, who is always with the Shah, has sent you a letter which I enclose. The substance of his verbal messages to you is that if the Shah does everything you want, so much the better; and if not, the Russian Government will furnish you with everything wanting. The object of the Russians is to have a road to the English (India), and for this they are very anxious.”

It is to be observed that in the original mutilated and garbled version of the *Correspondence relating to Cabul and Afghanistan*, the letter from which the above passages are cited had been omitted. It was published for the first time in 1859, when no one was thinking of Afghanistan or of Russia. The edition of 1859, with the restored passages printed between brackets, recalls the words of Prince Bismarck, who, asked in the Chamber why Prussia, unlike the other European Governments, published no collections of diplomatic documents, replied that, to prepare such documents for the use of the public, it would be necessary to “double the number of clerks employed in the Foreign Office.”

The Ameer had, on his side, written to the Emperor of Russia complaining that the English were support-

ing Shah Shoojah ; that they were on good terms with Runjeet Singh ; that they did not seem favourably disposed towards him, Dost Mahomed ; that the Sikhs were his enemies ; and that he hoped the Emperor would "arrange matters in the Afghan country," and allow the Ameer "to be received, like the Persians, under the government of Russia."

The letter from the Emperor Nicholas in reply, though it contained no direct promise of assistance, was thought sufficiently compromising by the English Foreign Office to be suppressed. So also was a passage in a letter from Count Simonitch referring to the fact that Vitkievitch had gone to Cabul as bearer of an autograph letter from the Tzar, and another passage setting forth that the presents he was charged to offer came from "the Imperial store."

The presents offered by Burnes had been, in accordance with his formal instructions on the subject, "of moderate value" ; and he felt it necessary to apologise for their poorness, and to explain that they had no governmental character, but were his own personal gifts. General Hanlan, an American officer who commanded Dost Mahomed's regular troops, and acted as Chief of the Staff to the entire army, has told us in his volume on Afghanistan that Burnes's offerings (which, by the American's description, would seem to have come originally from the Lowther Arcade) were despised, and that they were regarded with contempt even by the

ladies of the harem among whom they were distributed.

The arrival of Vitkievitch at Cabul, bearing rich presents, was something more than annoying; for though the Ameer could neither accept the support of England, involving as it did his abandonment of Peshawur, nor that of Russia, which was conditional on his recognizing the claims of Persia over Herat, the interference of Russia in the affairs of Afghanistan had all the same the effect of bringing about a war between England and Cabul.

The Russians were quite satisfied with the result attained; for the official historian of Perofski's expedition writes that the Russian agent "contrived to acquire the friendship of Dost Mahomed of Cabul, whom he succeeded in disposing favourably towards Russia."

Vitkievitch (misnamed by Burnes "Vickovitch") had received only verbal instructions, and, according to the Russian writer just referred to, he was "not to disclose anywhere that he was sent by the Government." But Vitkievitch said everywhere who and what he was, and wore habitually the uniform of a Cossack officer. This strange demeanour on the part of a Russian agent caused a certain amount of mystification. Vitkievitch was described as a "Russian from Moscow," an "Anatolian," a "Cossack"; and one of the English agents, whom he had informed that he was a Pole, pronounced this statement not only untrue, but "disgusting," since

no one, he said, could conceive a Pole entering the service of Russia.

Vitkievitch, however, was really a Pole, and he had not been consulted as to whether or not he would enter the Russian service. Convicted in 1824, when a student at Wilna, of having organized a secret society called the Black Brothers, and of having written "revolutionary letters and verses," he was transported to Orenburg, and drafted as private into one of the battalions of the Orenburg corps. Six years afterwards he was, on the recommendation of his colonel, and in consideration of his praiseworthy conduct, talents, and knowledge of the Persian and Kirghiz language, promoted to the grade of under-officer and attached to the Orenburg Boundary Commission. In 1831 he performed brilliant military service in the Kirghiz country, and his reports were declared in an official document to be "full of interesting information and remarks, so that not one of his predecessors in the steppe had been able to form so correct a judgment of the Kirghiz tribes or of their relations to each other." In August of the same year the chief of the Orenburg corps recommended Vitkievitch for a commission, observing that, with the exception of a certain "secretiveness of disposition, the natural result of so many misfortunes," his behaviour was all that could be desired. Vitkievitch, however, in spite of his services and of the good opinion with which he had inspired his superior

officers, did not receive his commission until 1834, when he is said to have owed it in some measure to the representations of the illustrious Humboldt, whose acquaintance he had made at St. Petersburg, and who interested himself greatly on Vitkievitch's behalf. After his expedition to Bokhara he was advanced one step ; and on his return to St. Petersburg from Cabul, at the end of April 1839, he was recommended for promotion in the Guards, besides being decorated and having a sum of money allotted to him.

At Cabul, whether from a wish to inspire confidence in return, or with the direct object of alarming the English, Vitkievitch gave freely the sort of news that one would have expected him to withhold. Thus he told Burnes that General Barofski was commanding the force before Herat, and that the Russians were about to send against Khiva that expedition under General Perofski (with whom General Barofski was naturally confounded in the journals of the period) which the English believed to have arrived in Khiva long before it had started from Orenburg. The Russians, indeed, waited to make their attack on Khiva until the English should have occupied Cabul ; one of the instructions issued by Imperial command to Perofski, on the 24th of March 1839, being to the effect that the departure should be postponed "until the settlement of English matters in Afghanistan, in order that the influence and impression of the Russian proceedings in

Central Asia might have more weight, and that England in consequence of her own conquests, might no longer have any right to trouble the Russian Government for explanations."

Vitkievitch was a friend of Count Soltykoff, well known by his travels in Persia and in India, and had repeatedly shown him a pistol with which he intended, he said, some day or other to shoot himself. Soon after his return to St. Petersburg from the mission to Cabul, he, in fact, blew his brains out, leaving behind him a letter from which it appeared that he suffered from no one grievance in particular, but was discontented with the world in general. A disturbance had recently taken place at Wilna, in which he feared that his brother might have been implicated. But this affords no direct clue to his suicide, since he had ascertained that his brother was not concerned in the outbreak. The night before his suicide he was at the theatre with Prince Soltykoff, apparently in excellent spirits; and before retiring to bed he had given orders to be called early the next morning. But he killed himself with deliberation, and before doing so destroyed all the papers, including copies of his correspondence with the English agents in Afghanistan, which he was to have embodied in a report for the Asiatic department of the Russian Foreign Office.

Of the arguments and promises employed by Vitkievitch in his dealings with the chiefs of Candahar and

with the Ameer of Cabul, we have sufficient knowledge from the reports transmitted by Burnes to the Indian Government. The Russian agent, as Lieutenant Leech sent word from Candahar to Burnes at Cabul, was offering money for a war against the Sikhs, for the reconquest of Mooltan and Derajat, and for "regaining Sind." The Russians would send arms, moreover, but not men; and the Sirdars of Candahar were informed that "the English had preceded the Russians in civilisation for some generations, but that now the latter had arisen from their sleep and were seeking for foreign possessions and alliances; and that the English were not a military nation, but merely the merchants of Europe." *

At Cabul Vitkievitch informed the Ameer "that the Emperor of Russia was supreme in his dominions, and could act of himself with promptitude and without being delayed by consulting others, while the British Government transacted its business by a Council, which gave rise to procrastination, and would show to him the advantage of allying himself to Russia, where no such inconvenience existed." After quitting Cabul, some weeks later than Burnes, Vitkievitch wrote a letter to the Ameer upbraiding him with his hesitancy, and reproaching him with not having had the sense to

* *Correspondence relating to Afghanistan and Cabul*, p. 127.

accept either the English or the Russian alliance. Thus, whatever his Government may have thought of the matter, Vitkievitch himself would seem to have been dissatisfied with the result of his mission. His early adventure in the character of Polish patriot, the enterprise he displayed in the steppes and on the journey to Bokhara, his arrival and virtual proclamation, both at Bokhara and at Cabul, of the business on which he was engaged, together with his energy and activity as a soldier, a student, and an observer, prove him to have been a man of high spirit; and he may possibly have regarded his mission to the Ameer as a failure. One effect which in any case it produced was to raise apprehensions on the part of England, and bring about the occupation of Afghanistan, with consequences sufficiently well known.

In regard to Perofski's expedition against Khiva, undertaken simultaneously with the English expedition against Cabul, enough has already been said. Marching in winter, Perofski suffered even more from the cold than Bekovitch in 1717 had suffered from the heat, without even succeeding, as the ill-fated Bekovitch had done, in reaching his destination. The object of Perofski's expedition was less to threaten India than—to quote from the summary of the official historian—“to establish not the dominion but the strong influence of Russia in the neighbouring khanates for the reciprocal advantages of trade, and to prevent the in-

fluence of the East India Company in Central Asia, so dangerous to Russia, from taking root." The Russians had, no doubt, taken alarm at the reports which had reached them of the endeavours made by English agents to establish commercial intercourse with Bokhara.

The mission, however, of Vitkievitch was purely and directly of a political character. From Cabul he was to have proceeded to Lahore; and both at Cabul and at Candahar he offered a Russian alliance, with subsidies and arms, in view of an attack upon Herat and upon England's allies in India. A few years later, when the English had retired from Afghanistan, and the English agents Abbot and Shakespear had settled the difficulty in which the Russians declared the Khivan question to consist, by bringing back to Russia the four or five hundred prisoners whom the Khan had been detaining in captivity, there was for a time an end to the action of Russia in Central Asian affairs.

In 1857, however, the Khans of Khiva and Bokhara were imprudent enough to send embassies to St. Petersburg for the purpose of congratulating Alexander the Second on his accession to the throne. They informed the Russians, with some *naïveté*, that no return visit was expected. But it seemed absolutely necessary to reply to so much politeness, and in 1858 Colonel (now General) Ignatieff, who had but lately quitted the post of military attaché to the Russian Embassy at London

(where, by the way, he distinguished himself by a report on our Indian army which attracted the special attention of the Emperor), was despatched to Khiva and Bokhara at the head of a complimentary mission, which had also the character of a military reconnaissance. Accompanied by several scientific officers, and attended by a powerful escort, while his flank, during the early part of the march, was guarded by a flying column sent in reconnaissance across the steppes, Colonel Ignatieff started, like Bekovitch, in the hot weather, and came back, like Perofski, in the cold. The details of his expedition are full of interest, but scarcely belong to the subject under consideration. Enough that Colonel Ignatieff went through many hardships, encountered many dangers, reached both the distant points for which he had started, and, after a narrow escape of being frozen to death, returned in safety to Orenburg.

It has been said that Ignatieff's mission was in fact a military reconnaissance. He made the expedition under conditions which were in many respects new; and the information he brought back as to routes, distances, state of the country, disposition of the tribes, and so on, must have been of great service to General Kaufmann when the time came for that commander to organize the expedition which ended in the subjugation of Khiva and its virtual annexation to the Russian dominions.

The repeated expeditions of Russia against Khiva need not be regarded as exclusively the result of a desire to approach as closely as possible our Indian possessions. The Russians must have wished, in the case of Perofski's expedition, to procure the liberation of their captives; and it is evident that they could not establish regular commercial relations with Bokhara, if their caravans were to be perpetually harassed by Khivan brigands. But the Russians attacked Khiva before their trade with Central Asia had acquired any appreciable value; and they sent expeditions against it equally when the Khan of Khiva had, and when he had not, Russian prisoners in his keeping. We have seen that Peter the Great looked upon Khiva as an important station on the road to India, and that his successors, "following out his instructions and views," entertained the idea of "establishing themselves in Central Asia, and thus opening a new road for Russian commerce to the east." We have seen, too, that the Emperor Paul, in 1799, proposed a combined expedition of Russian and French troops, which, starting from Astrabad on the south-eastern shore of the Caspian, was to have marched through Afghanistan to India; while, in 1801, he equipped and despatched an expedition of twenty-two thousand Cossacks to Khiva and Bokhara, with instructions to raise the populations on the way and penetrate into India. We have seen, moreover, that though Orloff, after he had marched

some four hundred and fifty miles, was recalled by Alexander the First, Alexander himself renewed, six years afterwards, the project of an expedition to India conjointly with Napoleon. The Franco-Russian expedition of 1807, with Cossacks in advance and French infantry in the main body, was to have passed through Persia; and this route was the one contemplated by a distinguished Russian commander, General Khruleff, who just before the end of the Crimean war, the 7th of January 1856, proposed to Prince Dolgorouki, at that time Russian Minister of War, an "expedition to Afghanistan for the purpose of overthrowing the English rule in India."

According to a Russian Journal the *St. Petersburg News*, quoted by the *Pall Mall Gazette* of August 12, 1878, "the idea of an expedition to India has never left the Russian mind throughout the whole of the nineteenth century. Every forward movement in the steppes has always been accompanied by the thought of an advance against India. No general, no staff commander, who has ever been in the steppes or in Turkestan, from Khruleff to Tcherniaieff, has failed to draw up a project for a march of the Russian army to India." These projects have not, as a rule, been made public. General Khruleff's plan, however, was printed quite lately in a Russian journal, entitled *Ancient and New Russia*; and at the present crisis it will be interesting, and may even be instructive, to see on what grounds a

Russian general experienced both in Asiatic and in European warfare wished to see Khiva subjugated, and to what use he proposed to turn the Afghans in an attempt to destroy the power of England.

Neither Russians nor Russia's most devoted friends have of late years made any secret of Russia's intention, in case of a new war with England, to threaten our Indian empire, not, indeed, with a view to conquest, but by way of what is called a "diversion." "With respect to a military expedition to India," wrote some fifteen years ago a Russian military traveller,* "the Amu-Daria (Oxus) may be used for despatching a small force through its upper course, not with an idea of conquest, but for making a demonstration with the object of alarming the enemy and diverting his attention from other points." "The Russians are steadily advancing towards India," wrote the late Mr. MacGahan,† whom no one will suspect of enmity to Russia, "and they will sooner or later acquire a position in Central Asia, which will enable them to threaten it. Should England be engaged in a European war, and not show herself sufficiently accommodating on the Bosphorus, then, indeed, Russia would probably strike a blow at England's Indian empire."

* *The Russians in Central Asia*, translated from the Russian by John and Robert Michell, p. 404.

† *Campaigning on the Oxus, and the Fall of Khiva*, p. 425.

Indeed, as pointed out at length in a previous chapter, MacGahan the "Russophil" thought with Vambéry the "Russophobe" that—to employ the words of the latter—"the Eastern question might be more easily solved on the Hindoo Kush than on the Bosphorus, though the Russians would not necessarily choose the difficult road through Balkh to Cabul and none other—the road through Herat and Candahar, the proper caravan course to India, being far more convenient."*

Opinions, of course, differ as to the number of men with which Russia could safely attempt an invasion of India. It has been stated by a well-known Russian partisan that "Russia would be stark mad to venture an attack upon India with an army of less than two hundred thousand men." General Khruleff, however, who had commanded troops at Sebastopol, and directed expeditions in Central Asia, thought such an attack might safely and effectively be made with an army of only thirty thousand.

On questions of this kind English clergymen are nothing like such good authorities as Russian generals. Now Russian generals tell us that for an expedition across the steppes an enormous train is required: thus Perofski took with him, for five thousand fighting men, ten thousand camels and two thousand five hundred

* *Sketches of Central Asia.*

camel-drivers. They declare, on the other hand, that for a march across the fertile country between the Caspian and Candahar an unusually small train (as compared with the train found necessary for ordinary European armies) would suffice. "The important question of shaking the rule of the English to its foundations, and of inciting the subject races to an attempt to gain their freedom, may be determined," wrote General Khruleff in 1856, when the war in the Crimea was still being carried on, "by the despatch of a corps of thirty thousand men to Candahar. The essential conditions, however, are, in the first place, the perfect neutrality of Persia and the co-operation of Afghanistan in the war." After showing how the friendship of Persia may be secured, he continues as follows:—

"The Afghans applied to Russia in 1837 and 1838 for her protection against the English; they will be gratified at our endeavour to overthrow the English rule; their detestation of the English is yet alive. If the English anticipate us, and invade Afghanistan to check our influence, our plan can be carried into effect all the sooner. There will then be a popular outbreak before our appearance. The English cannot introduce a large army into that mountainous country. Death will face them in every defile, as was the case in the war with the Afghans. If the English resolve upon a defensive war in their Indian dominions, then our

presence in Afghanistan will promote the rising of the Indians against the hated English rule. A movement of troops will be irksome to the English."

The precautions which General Khruleff recommends in view of possible attacks from the Khivans and the Turkoman tribes generally, would now no longer be necessary ; and all that he says on that head may be passed over.

As to the line of march and the feeding of the troops he says :—

"The road from Ak-Kala to Candahar offers no difficulties. It is practicable for artillery and for a commissariat train : water, rice, barley, and sheep can be procured in plenty. The grazing land is good. The expeditions of Shah Mahomed have shown that some tens of thousands of soldiers totally unprovided for have found provisions on the road through Bujnurd, Kuchan, Meshed, and Herat. Captain Blaremborg, of our service, participated in one of these campaigns, and in the siege of Herat, when it was defended by Lieutenant Pottinger of the English army. The siege of Herat was in 1835. From Meshed to Herat we should find easy means of transport on account of the great concentration of caravans at Meshed. The country around Herat is famous for its fertility. From Ak-Kala the troops would reach Herat in thirty-five days, marching twenty-five versts [from sixteen to seven-

teen miles] per day. The march of the English troops into Afghanistan showed that, whilst coming as enemies, their army was supplied with forage by the natives. We may be perfectly sure that we should encounter no difficulty in the matter of supplies. The road from Herat to Candahar, the Gate of India, is known to us. Captain Vitkievitch was sent to Cabul by General Simonitch, our envoy in Persia. Having secured the neutrality of Persia, and having made ourselves secure on the side of Khiva, Bokhara, and Kokand,* we could at once march a force of thirty thousand men to Candahar, sending an embassy from thence to Cabul, which would finally dispose the natives in our favour and raise our influence over that of the English.

“While stating my plan” (continues the memorandum) “I am deeply penetrated with a conviction of the possibility of carrying it into execution, and of this the English are better assured than we are. A numerous force would be embarrassing; we should endeavour to raise a native force; our own should form the reserve. We are bound to instruct the population in our own methods of offering opposition to the oppression of the English, whose force in India consists of only twenty-five thousand European troops. The army of India, according to Major Everest, consisting of three hundred

* Russia, by the subjection of Khiva and Bokhara, has made herself quite secure on this side.

thousand men, is dispersed over an extent of one million and seventy-six thousand five hundred and ninety English miles, and is called upon to guard a frontier of seven hundred and seven geographical miles, being at the same time commanded by only seven thousand three hundred and forty-three European officers, which was the establishment in 1847. There have been many instances in which these troops have fled before compact masses of native foes of England, when the officers were killed. The entrance of a long-desired corps of thirty thousand men into Afghanistan will excite the national antipathy of the Afghans to the English, and will shake the power of the English in India.

“We may make compromises” (concludes General Khruleff) “with our other foes ; but England’s bearing towards us, which tends to the weakening of our power, does not justify us in leaving her at peace. We must free the people who are the sources of her wealth, and prove to all the world the might of the Russian Tzar.”

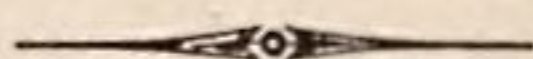
Since 1856 the position of England in India has become much stronger. So also has that of the Russians in Central Asia ; since, instead of being, as then, merely on the frontiers of Turkestan, defended by a fort, at only a little distance from the Aral lake, they have now established themselves at Khiva and Bokhara, have reached the Upper Oxus, and are able to station troops at a distance of only one hundred and fifty miles

from Cabul. They have now, in fact, two roads into Afghanistan at their service, instead of, as in General Khruleff's time, only one.

It may be, as some writers are fond of assuring us, that the Russians have neither the wish nor the power to use these roads. But the Russians themselves, with a sincerity which must often try the patience of their English partizans, tell a very different tale. Russian diplomatists, questioned by English diplomatists as to the meaning of Russia's continued advance in Central Asia, have given the answers expected from them, without being believed and without caring whether they were believed or not. But Russian military and official writers addressing their own countrymen, together with any foreigners who may think fit to read their books, have said plainly what diplomatists, whose first duty it is to make things pleasant and to arrange matters without calling in the aid of the military, could not well do: that the Central Asian Khanates had to be subdued, partly for the sake of commerce, but partly also that Russia may find herself in a position to strike a blow at England. This latter is the sole view of the case taken by such men as Mouravieff, the military traveller, and Khruleff, the military commander. It is not every Russian writer on this subject who proposes, like General Khruleff, to destroy the English power in India. But even those who profess themselves peacefully inclined, and who deprecate

the idea of Russia's approach to India being regarded by Englishmen as a menace, say plainly that the Russians would, on occasion, make use of their position in Central Asia for threatening our Indian possessions. We may at some future time reproach ourselves with laziness and wilful blindness in neglecting to profit by a warning from a quarter so likely to be well informed. But we, at least, cannot accuse the Russians of having meanly concealed their intentions.

APPENDIX.



THE RUSSIANS IN SERVIA.

SPEECH (CONDENSED) OF MR. IVAN AKSAKOFF (Vice-President of the Slavonic Committee of Moscow) ;
October, 1876.

GENTLEMEN,

It may be thought that the hour has at last arrived for Russia to resign into the hands of the State this great and important work which, during so many months, the people have carried on with incredible exertion without any help or co-operation from the Government. I do not speak here of the help afforded to the sick and wounded, the famished and the destitute Bulgarians and Servians of different denominations. I do not speak of the help in the shape of money and old clothes, but the help of the nation's blood, the toilsome work of deliverance,—in one word, the active share the Russian people took in the Servian war for the Slavonic independence. The armistice lately signed

by the Porte does not insure with certainty the conclusion of such a peace as would satisfy the lawful claims of our brethren, the honour of our people, and repay the bloody sacrifices made by Russia. The temporary cessation of the war cannot be a reason for relaxing the exertions which have signalised the last few months of our public life. This is not the moment to send in our resignation. The time has not yet come for our society to lay aside the heavy burden of this uncommon, unforeseen, and unexpected activity.

I have said uncommon, unforeseen, and unexpected, because what has been done lately in Russia is indeed unparelled, not only in the history of Russia, but in that of any other nation. The society, or rather the people, without the help of the Government, which is unconditionally true to its diplomatic obligations, and without the help of any official organization, carry on a war in the person of some thousands of her sons (I say sons, not hirelings) at their own expense in a country which, though bound to ours by strong ties of relationship, is little known to the masses, and has been up till now rarely spoken of; and this is done neither for the sake of gain nor in view of selfishly practical or material interests, but for interests apparently foreign and abstract. The war is carried on not stealthily or secretly, but openly in sight of all, with full conviction of the lawfulness, right, and holiness of the cause.

This plain and spontaneous movement cannot be understood by Western Europe, where most public movements appear to be the result of a prepared conspiracy, and can only take place under the direction and through the medium of regularly organized secret societies. It is therefore not to be wondered at that some persons, like Lord Beaconsfield, and not he alone, but even some Russians, ignorant of their own country, and mostly of the highest rank, find secret societies even in Russia, so that all the "shame," or, as we think, all the honour, of the Russian popular interference in the Servian war is to be ascribed to the Slavonic Committee.

One cannot read without a smile such strange ideas as to the power of our society. You, gentlemen, know better than any how little our society deserves the honour attributed to it. Such is the nature of this popular movement, that it could never have been invented by the committee, nor could it have shrunk into the narrow moulds which the society could have formed for it. In reality it has far over-stepped its borders, and has nearly crushed by its force our modest organization. At present it is not the concern of the Slavonic Committee, but of the whole of Russia, and it is the greatest honour of our society to become the simple instrument of the popular idea and the popular will—an instrument, to our regret, very feeble and insufficient.

That there was no premeditation in the action of the

committee can be best seen in the fact that the society was not prepared for the immense activity which fell to its lot. Our committee of management, composed only of three or four persons without any regular office, continued for a long time to work in its usual way, though with great difficulty. In July they engaged a paid secretary, and thereafter, yielding by degrees to necessity, they enlarged the number of officials, and accepted at the same time the zealous and efficient co-operation spontaneously offered by many members of the Slavonic Committee and of nearly the whole staff of the Mutual Credit Society, of which I have the honour to be the president. If this frank acknowledgment of ours can draw upon us the reproach of want of foresight, it can, on the other hand, serve as a most eloquent answer to the calumnies of foreign newspapers. The English Premier, I suppose, would be very much astonished if he verified his notions of our committee by an examination of our ledgers and accounts. But even the reproach of short-sightedness would be unjust. The popular movement has surprised not only the whole of Europe, but also Russian society (that is, the educated reflecting part of Russia), precisely because it was popular, not in the rhetorical but in the plain literal meaning of the word. For scores of years the preaching of the so-called Slavophiles resounded, and was, it seemed, as the voice "of one crying in the wilderness."

Twenty-two years ago the Crimean war broke out, also as a result of the Eastern, or, more strictly speaking, the Slavonic question, and evoked a powerful expression of patriotism. It did not, however, awaken the historical self-consciousness in those classes of the people in which are the roots of the Russian power, both internal and external. Unseen by us and invisible is the secret process of the popular ripening and the working of the popular organism. We could certainly assume that with the abolition of serfdom and of many legal class distinctions, together with the spread of elementary education, the intellectual views of the people must expand, and their minds acquire greater freedom of action. But the events which have occurred have surpassed the most sanguine expectations. I confess frankly that every new appearance of popular sympathy came upon me as a delightful surprise, until at last it was manifested in its full power and truth. Not less astonished was I by the gradual change in the thoughts and expressions in our so-called intelligent circles and in our press. All the literary parties and factions intermingled and found themselves, to their mutual surprise, in agreement and unity on this question. The opponents of yesterday found themselves friends, as if they had broken their stilts, come down to the ground, thrown off the disguise of harlequins, and shown themselves—what they are in truth—Russians and nothing else. There was in all this enough to

surprise any one who remembered the past of our social life. It was cleared up not at once, but gradually, by the current of events. When the rising in Herzegovina began rather more than a year ago, and the Slavonic Committee of Moscow as well as the St. Petersburg branch published the appeals of the Servian and Montenegrin Metropolitans, and these appeals from the ecclesiastical personages were made known (only made known and nothing else), the donations assumed unheard-of dimensions. The limits of the orthodox world began to widen before the eyes of the people, new vistas of fraternity were opened up to them, but all was still in confusion. Not less confused were the ideas of the higher classes. When General Tchernayeff arrived in Moscow in September last year, and proposed to take with him to Montenegro fifty non-commissioned officers, and arms for five hundred persons, his plan could not be put into execution because the Committee had no funds, and private persons did not show any readiness to supply them.

The subsequent activity of the Committee was for some time, in appearance and reality, of a charitable nature. The volunteers who started for Herzegovina were all South Slavonians, Servians, and Bulgarians, living in Russia.

The only exceptions were two Russian officers who had expressly come to Moscow after having been refused assistance in St. Petersburg.

When on the Slavonic horizon appeared the dawn of a new and, in a political sense, a more important struggle, the struggle between the Servian principalities and the Porte for the freedom of the Slavonic territories tributary to the Turks, and when at the end of last March General Tchernayeff announced to the committee his intention of going to Servia, the committee could but perceive the great significance of such an event as the appearance of Tchernayeff at the head of the Servian army. But neither the committee nor Tchernayeff could then foresee what would happen to the Russian people.

It was clear to the committee that the act of self-sacrifice on the part of Tchernayeff could not but raise among the Slavonians the honour of the Russian name, greatly compromised by diplomacy, and could not fail at the same time to raise the moral level of Russian society by increasing its self-respect.

It was necessary to remove some pecuniary difficulties which prevented the departure of Tchernayeff. A sum of six thousand roubles was needed, and the committee did not hesitate to advance it. Soon after Tchernayeff's arrival in Servia began the Turkish atrocities in Bulgaria.

No special efforts were required to awaken Russian sympathy and compassion. For the Russians there is no enemy more popular than the Turk. Donations of money and effects flowed in in torrents.

The Servian war began. With breathless anxiety Russia followed the uneven struggle of the little orthodox country, smaller than the province of Tamboff, with the vast army gathered together from Asiatic hordes dispersed over three quarters of the globe. But when the Servian army suffered the first defeat, when on the soil of the awakened popular feeling fell, so to speak, the first drop of Russian blood, when the first deed of love was completed, when the first pure victim was sacrificed for the faith and on behalf of the brethren of Russia in the person of one of her own sons, then the conscience of all Russia shuddered.

As from the first, so afterwards, the Muscovite Slavonic Committee offered no invitations nor allurements to secure volunteers. One after another came retired officers requesting advice and directions how to go to Servia and enter the ranks of the army under the command of Tchernayeff.

The news of the death of Kiréef, the first Russian who fell in this war, at once stimulated hundreds to become volunteers, an event which repeated itself when the news was received of other deaths among the Russian volunteers. Death did not frighten, but, as it were, attracted them. At the beginning of the movement the volunteers were men who had belonged to the army, and chiefly from among the nobles. I remember the feeling of real emotion which I experienced when the first sergeant came requesting me to send him to Servia

—so new was to me the existence of such a feeling in the ranks of the people. This feeling soon grew in intensity, when not only old soldiers but even peasants came to me with the same request. And how humbly did they persevere in their petition, as if begging alms ! With tears they begged me, on their knees, to send them to the field of battle. Such petitions of the peasants were mostly granted, and you should have seen their joy at the announcement of the decision !

However, those scenes became so frequent, and business increased to such an extent, that it was quite impossible to watch the expression of popular feeling or to inquire into particulars from the volunteers as to their motives. “I have resolved to die for my faith,” “My heart burns,” “I want to help our brethren,” “Our people are being killed.” Such were the brief answers which were given with quiet sincerity.

I repeat there was not, and could not be, any mercenary motive on the part of the volunteers. I, at least, conscientiously warned every one of the hard lot awaiting him ; and, indeed, even at first sight, no particular advantage could appear. Each one received only fifty roubles, out of which thirty-five went to pay the fare through Roumania, and the rest was for food and other expenses.

The movement assumed at last such dimensions, that we had to establish a special section for the re-

ception of the volunteers and the examination of their requests and depositions.

All parts of Russia were desirous of having branches of the Slavonic Committee. From every town propositions were sent to us, but, to our regret, we were unable to satisfy their urgent demands. The permission to establish fresh sections did not depend upon us, but upon the Minister of the Interior.

Fortunately there is a society in Odessa called the Benevolent Society of Cyril and Methodius, which rendered great services to the general cause. Fortunately, also, in some of our provincial towns there were governors who took a part in the popular feeling, and who allowed the inhabitants to organize small societies for the reception of donations. These latter became afterwards centres for local activity. But when a movement embraces tens of millions scattered over an extent equal to nearly a quarter of the globe, it is impossible to arrange and regulate the expression of feeling, and particularly without the requisite publicity. Those who imagine that it is easy to subordinate such a movement to any committee or organization do not know the nature of popular movements, especially in Russia. The donations became special, according to the wish of the donor. Many towns, villages, and private persons, without communicating with the committees, wrote direct to Tchernayeff, Prince Milan, Princess Nathalie, Prince Nicholas of Monte-

negro, or the Metropolitan Michael. They even sent deputations, volunteers, money and clothes, minutely explaining the purpose for which each article was intended, expressing at the same time their sympathies and hopes. All this irregularity was quite natural, for the thing itself was most unusual and unprecedented.

Yes, gentlemen, there was no precedent, no experience, either in Russian society in general or in our committee in particular.

The committee had not only to distribute help in money, but also to take the duties of superintendence, inspection, providing medicine, arms, provisions, and, one might even add, duties of the General Staff. There is not the least doubt that such an unaccustomed work, organized so suddenly, was fraught with many mistakes, and sometimes, notwithstanding all our efforts, did not obtain the desired results. But one must also bear in mind that there was a total absence of any sort of organization in Servia herself.

Be this as it may, the Slavonic Committee worked hard and conscientiously.

I come now to the question of the accounts. We cannot give, however, at present, very detailed or precise ones, for from various places we have as yet not received them ourselves.

I foresee that the amount of our receipts will greatly disappoint the public. We have heard and read daily that Russia has sent to the Slavs millions of money ;

and the stern question arises, What became of these millions? The rumours set afloat about these millions have as much truth as those concerning the numbers of volunteers, of whom it is said we sent twenty thousand, when, in fact, only a fifth part of that number, perhaps less, were sent. The truth is, at Moscow and St. Petersburg we received a little more than a million and a half of roubles. It must be borne in mind that we had to give help to Herzegovina, Montenegro, Bosnia, Bulgaria, and Servia.

During the last months many small committees were formed over the whole of Russia, and sent out their donations independently of us. But these sums were comparatively small. Nearly all western Russia (Polish provinces) dispensed with the co-operation of our Slavonic Committee. Some societies and commercial establishments—as, for instance, the St. Petersburg Municipal Credit Company, which had remitted to Tchernayeff one hundred thousand roubles, and had given also the same amount to the St. Petersburg Committee—likewise sent out help themselves. It is, therefore, still impossible to state the precise amount of the donations; but it may be said that, including the money spent by the chief society for the tending of the sick and wounded soldiers, the total sum would be scarcely more than three millions of roubles. The value of the articles given may amount to half a million more. The sum is enormous, and yet it is small—that is to say, in

comparison with the requirements. For upwards of three million of our orthodox brethren of the Balkan Peninsula are in want of the most important and essential things—food, clothing, and shelter. It is small, compared to the size of Russia, with her eighty million of inhabitants, and her power—small in comparison with the scores of millions reported. It is enormous if you consider the source from which it came, our social condition, and the impediments which came in the way ; enormous, because two-thirds of the donations were given by our poor peasants, much oppressed by want ; and every copper coin they gave will weigh undoubtedly heavier in the scale of history than hundreds of ducats. One may remark, in general, that the amount of the donations decreased according to the exalted position of the donor in the social scale. There were a few exceptions to this rule, and we must also consider the bad harvests of the last years. It is an undoubted fact, however, that the eminently wealthy took no share in the movement, probably from a lack of sympathy. Finally, the sum is enormous considering the novelty of the matter, the inability of working together, the difficulty of intercourse between the different parts of Russia, and the impossibility of using freely the help of the press.

I shall not stop now to explain the particulars of our receipts, though they are of great interest. But because they are so full of interest they demand a

minute exposition, and our honourable secretary, who is also a professor of history, is now engaged on that work. The letters which came with the donations are now assorted, and many of them being the simple expressions of the popular feeling, bear witness to the truth of the present historical movement.

I pass to the expenses. At first the donations were exclusively devoted to supplying the wants of the orthodox Slavonic families in Herzegovina, Bosnia, and Montenegro, and all the money sent with that object to Ragusa and to the Montenegrin Government during the first eight months amounted to (about) ninety-six thousand roubles.

During the latter part of the year—that is, when Montenegro declared war—only (about) thirty-nine thousand six hundred roubles were sent. Certainly it is not a large sum, but the idea that Montenegro was forgotten and neglected is not just. It could not be forgotten, for it made itself remembered continually by heroic deeds, which, in conjunction with those of our volunteers, are the only bright reminiscences of the whole of this unequal struggle. But one can also understand that at the beginning of the Servian war all the interest was concentrated upon that spot where so much Russian blood was shed, and where the issue of the war had such serious significance.

Donations for Montenegro have again begun to

arrive, and it was only yesterday that we received an anonymous donation of five thousand roubles for that country.

I will submit immediately to you a letter of Prince Nicholas, and information respecting the wretched position of Montenegro after the war. I suppose we could without difficulty grant fifty thousand roubles for that purpose.

In aid of unhappy Bulgaria about thirty-nine thousand roubles were expended. To the Bulgarian as well as Bosnian families who found shelter in Servia we sent thirteen thousand roubles.

Up to this time General Tchernayeff has had, for his support and that of his staff and the volunteers who served under him, about seventy-nine thousand roubles. The greater part of that sum was specially given for "General Tchernayeff." It is well known that neither General Tchernayeff nor the Russian volunteers received money from the Servian Government for their support. Tchernayeff gave help to the needy wounded and returning soldiers, bought horses, and defrayed many other expenses for his army. When General Novosseloff assumed the command of the Ibar army the committee sent, for the wants of Russian volunteers serving under him, about twenty-one thousand roubles. Part of that sum was contributed from the interior of Russia; six thousand roubles were sent for the sick and wounded in Servia under the protection of Princess

Nathalie; ten thousand roubles were placed at Prince Milan's disposal.

When the war between the Turks and the Montenegrins began, we sent there thirteen doctors and fourteen assistants, with a salary of two hundred roubles for the doctors and seventy-five roubles each for the assistants per month, exclusive of travelling expenses. The labours of the doctors were attended with great success. They earned the thanks of Prince Milan and the whole of the people.

The committee sent also twenty-three sisters of mercy, with a salary of sixty roubles monthly, under the supervision of the Princess Schachovskoy, and seven sisters, besides, attached to the sanitary detachment of the Society of Russian Doctors. Of the doctors and assistants sent by us, three doctors and ten assistants have already returned. The choice of these latter was mostly unsuccessful, but they were easily replaced by the sisters of mercy, who were all well, in dressing wounds and tending the sick.

Two thousand roubles were spent in the purchase of pack-horses and other necessities.

The supervision of the sanitary department was confided to Mr. Nicolayeff, who not only largely subscribed, but went himself, at his own expense, to Servia. His health, unfortunately, did not allow him to remain there more than a few weeks, and the department afterwards was entirely superintended by the Princess

Schachovskoy. We can only rejoice that the sanitary part of the work fell to the share of such a clever, energetic, and self-sacrificing lady. Acting for the Slavonic Committee, she immediately founded a hospital, which has since been transported to Belgrade. Up to this present moment the whole of the sanitary expenses amount to about thirty-one thousand roubles, but the whole of this sum is not yet spent.

The organization of the army telegraph in Servia cost the committee more than nine thousand roubles. About four thousand were devoted to the organizing of two movable churches with choristers. About six thousand roubles were spent on boots, clothes, and food.

We have still about one hundred and fifty-nine thousand roubles left, including five thousand roubles given by Madame Morogoff, and five hundred by Mr. Loukhine, sums given for special purposes,—the first, for educating the orphans of the Russian volunteers; the second, for the orphans of Servian soldiers.

The expenses, as you perceive, are not so great after all, considering the importance of the matter and the multitude of urgent wants.

We have still to face unavoidable expenses imposed upon us by the national conscience. We have to provide for the Russian volunteers who are still in Servia, for the wounded, and for the families of those who have fallen; and we must give to the surviving volun-

teers the means for returning home. We now have taken measures to form a regular system of paying salary to the volunteers in the service of Servia (which we had not done before), and this will be continued as long as we have the means of doing so. The Russian people will not abandon the work which it has begun ; of that we may be sure.

One cannot but remark that in the last few days, under the influence of the newspaper correspondence, the public sympathy for the Servians has cooled. Whatever may have been the faults of some Servians towards some Russians, on the whole we are to blame, not the Servians. Yes, we as a community, as Russia. The Servians cannot be expected to know, and cannot understand, that the help offered to them is merely the result of private efforts. Nor can they understand the peculiar condition in which we are placed. They write, print, and talk about the help from Russia, "the millions of Russia." Under the name of Russia the Servians and all Trans-Danubian Slavonians do not understand a certain class of society, but the Russian empire in its entirety. In a word, they are not accustomed to distinguish in Russia between the people and the Government ; and, trusting to Russia, they began a struggle above their strength. The results of this mistaken belief are known to everybody. Towns in flames, hundreds of villages destroyed, the occupation of the third part of their land by the Turks, exhaus-

tion of means, and general ruin ! Are we to punish them for their ruin ?

We must also not forget that the Servians of the principality have fought, not only for their country, but for the deliverance of all Slavonians who are suffering and dying under the yoke of the Turk, and whose fate is just as near to the heart of the Russian people.

We are in debt to the Servians ! But we shall not long remain so—the Russian people will not allow the Russian name to be disgraced ; and the blessed hour, so much hoped for by all, is near, when this work, which belongs properly to the State, will pass into the hands of our strong organized Government. Being led and aided by the popular force, the Government will take into its powerful hands the defence of the Slavs.

So be it !

IVAN AKSAKOFF.

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